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Assembly Proceedings

Official Report

Bengal Legislative Assembly

Seventeenth Session, 1943

The 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th,
27th and 28th September, 1943

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GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

His Excellency Sir THOMAS GEORGE RUTHERFORD, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN, K.C.I.E., in charge of the Home (Civil Defence Co-ordination) Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY, in charge of the Department of Civil Supplies.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI, in charge of the Finance Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN, in charge of the Education Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN, in charge of the Department of Communications and Works.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN, in charge of the Department of Agriculture (Rural Reconstruction).

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA, M.B.E., in charge of the Revenue Department (Evacuation and Relief).

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur, in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN, C.B.E., in charge of the Departments of Commerce, Labour and Industries (including Postwar Reconstruction).

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA, in charge of the Forests and Excise Department.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD, in charge of the Department of Public Health and Local Self-Government.

The Hon'ble Mr. PULIN BEHARY MULLICK, in charge of the Publicity Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL, in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

SPEAKER.

The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.

SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY, Esq.

SECRETARY.

K. ALI AFZAL, Esq., Barrister-at-law.

THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS

Official Report of the Seventeenth Session.

Volume LXVI—No. 2.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 20th September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 195 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Certain security prisoners treated as Division III convicts.

*51. **Mr. NIHARENDU DUTTA MAZUMDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing—

(*i*) the total number of persons detained by the Government under Defence of India Rules, rule 26, sub-rule (*5*), etc., or any other sub-rule or sub-rules under rule 26; and

(*ii*) the number of them that are being treated in jail according to—

(1) Bengal Security Prisoners Rules, 1940, and

(2) the special rule or order of Government treating a "certain class of security prisoners" as Division III convicts and excluding them from the privileges of security prisoners?

(*b*) Is it a fact—

(*i*) that the security prisoners referred to in (*a*) (*ii*) (2) are detained without trial and are being made to labour as Division III convicts; and

(*ii*) that a complaint in writing was filed before the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, on the 8th January, 1943, by a security prisoner of the Presidency Jail questioning the legality of compelling "a certain class of security prisoners" to labour against their will?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister contemplating making any enquiry into the matter?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) 4,019 on the 21st August, 1943.

(*ii*) (1) 1,503, and (2) 2,516.

(*b*) (*i*) These security prisoners are those who have no fixed place of residence or ostensible means of subsistence and have been convicted on more than one occasion of an offence against person or property or of criminal intimidation or involving a breach of the peace, and their conditions of

letention are laid down in rule 72 of the Bengal Security Prisoners Rules and are the same as those provided in the Bengal Jail Code for convicted prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment and classified in Division III, except that Chapter XXI of the said Code does not apply.

(*ii*) I have no information.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to answer (*b*)(*i*), are Government aware that there are certain security prisoners of that class who have got permanent residence in Calcutta and were employed in known institutions of repute?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: They may have permanent residence in Calcutta but they may not have any fixed or particular place of abode.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will Government consider the desirability of consulting competent legal opinion as to whether section 72 of the Bengal Security Prisoners Rules under which some people are forced to work against their will is strictly legal?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government have already taken legal advice and there is no further need to take legal opinion.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Are Government aware that there are persons among these classes of security prisoners who did not commit any offence for a long time—even for about 20 or 25 years?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice. Government have no information on that point.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Do Government think it desirable to enquire as to whether there are security prisoners of that class who are working in institutions of reputation and who did not commit any crime for about 20 or 25 years?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I may say that Government will regularly review the cases of these criminal security prisoners.

Alleged censoring of the report of Savarkar Anniversary meeting held at University Institute Hall.

***52. Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Press) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the report of the proceedings of the public meeting held at the University Institute Hall on the 28th May last in order to celebrate the 61st Birthday Anniversary of Veer Savarkar, that was despatched by the Calcutta News Agencies to the Provinces outside was censored by the Bengal Government; and

(*ii*) whether any mention of the fact that the meeting was held on the occasion of Birthday Anniversary of Veer Savarkar was withheld from those messages under order of the Press Censor?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*)(*i*) No report of the proceedings was censored. One news agency sought advice upon an account of one of the speeches delivered at the meeting and was advised to omit certain portions.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) It was considered that the portions which the agency was advised to omit would tend to influence the public in a manner likely to be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Are Government aware that Veer Savarkar has been exhorting the people to join the army and the navy since the beginning of the war?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: How does that question arise?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: It arises because it is likely to be——

Mr. SPEAKER: No, I have already stated that it does not arise out of the present question.

Grant-in-aid to Tamluk Hamilton High English School.

*53. **Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether it is a fact that the grant-in-aid to the Tamluk Hamilton High English School has been stopped; and

(*ii*) how long this school was receiving the grant-in-aid?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

Khan Sahib Maulvi MAFIZUDDIN AHMED (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*)(*i*) In November last the grant was temporarily suspended but it has now been restored and back payments made.

(*ii*) For over 25 years.

(*b*) The District Magistrate reported against the school for participation in anti-Government activities. The grant was restored when these were reported to have ceased.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Has Government also restored grant-in-aid for the period for which the grant-in-aid was temporarily suspended?

Khan Sahib Maulvi MAFIZUDDIN AHMED: Yes, certainly. All the back payments of the grant-in-aid up to three quarters have already been made. It was only the grant-in-aid for the last quarter, i.e., for October, November and December, which was suspended and that has been paid on the 18th March, 1943.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Are Government aware that the institution was functioning regularly in spite of disturbances all around?

Khan Sahib Maulvi MAFIZUDDIN AHMED: We have no information and I want notice.

Grant-in-aid to Paikgacha Middle English School.

***54. Mr. PATIRAM ROY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) the Paikgacha Middle English School is situated in a most backward area in the district of Khulna;

(*ii*) the Secretary of the said school applied to the Government for a grant-in-aid in the years 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1941, repeatedly; and

(*iii*) the applications were recommended by the district authorities?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action has been taken in the matter?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of sanctioning the grant for the said school?

Khan Sahib Maulvi MAFIZUDDIN AHMED (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) On account of limited budget provision no grant on a recurring basis could be made to it as yet. Non-recurring grants have been sanctioned from time to time out of the Scheduled Caste Education Fund.

(*c*) The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, is examining the question.

Introduction of standard weights under Standards of Weight Act, 1939.

***55. Mr. I. C. KENNEDY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department aware that the Bengal Paddy and Rice Enquiry Committee stated "that the prevailing 'babel' of weights and measures definitely hinders the free movement of cereals all over the Province, by preventing a ready comparison between the prices prevailing in different parts of it"?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps, if any, have been taken by Government to introduce standard weights in terms of the Standards of Weight Act, 1939 (Act IX of 1939)?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether sets of standard weights have been supplied by the Central Government to the Provincial Government in terms of sub-section (2) of section 4 of the Standards of Weight Act, 1939?

(*d*) Is it a fact that the enforcement of the Standards of Weight Act, 1939, is awaiting the initiation of provincial legislation?

(*e*) If so, when is it proposed to introduce the necessary legislation in the Legislature?

(*f*) Do the Government contemplate the enforcement of standard weights and measures in view of the food situation?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin): (*a*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*b*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*) The enforcement of the Standards of Weight Act, 1939, is awaiting the initiation of Provincial legislation. We propose very shortly to set up a small expert Committee to advise Government on the manner of giving effect to the Central Act in Bengal. Legislation will be undertaken as soon as the Committee submits its report.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why Government decided to set up a committee?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: In view of the fact that arrangements for supply and distribution of food in the province are at present affected by the absence of the use of standard weights, Government has decided to bring in legislation on the basis of the report of the committee.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Is the Government aware of the fact that the consumers are suffering a good deal of difficulties due to un-uniformity of weight during these days?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes. We intend to bring in a legislation in the next Assembly Session.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Government be pleased to state whether the Standards of Weight Act, 1939, has application in Bengal?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No, because unless an enabling Act is passed by this Assembly, it cannot come in force in this province.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Will the Government be pleased to state if this committee will be asked to submit its report in time to introduce legislation in the next session of the Assembly?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Government be pleased to state the causes of such delay, since the Act was passed in 1939?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: The Act came into force from 1st July, 1942, during the regime of the last Ministry and that Ministry did not take up the matter and also there was some delay on account of the fact that the standard sets of weights that were to be sent by the Central Government did not reach Bengal in time. These have been received very lately, and, therefore, there has been some delay.

Mr. AHMED HOSAIN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is possible for them to secure uniformity of weight through the medium of District Magistrates and Subdivisional Officers even without introducing any legislation?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No.

Mr. AHMED HOSAIN: Is it a fact that many of the District Magistrates and Subdivisional Officers have secured uniformity of weight in the districts and subdivisions even without legislation.

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That may be in particular areas, but there cannot be uniformity in this way.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Ban on the publication of a booklet "A Phase in Indian Struggle" by Dr. S. P. Mookerjee.

22. Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware of both the Bombay and Allahabad High Courts' decision that there is nothing objectionable in the publication *A Phase in Indian Struggle* by Dr. S. P. Mookerjee?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of lifting the ban on the publication referred to in (*a*)?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) From press reports it appears that (1) the Bombay High Court did not consider the publication in the newspaper *Janmabhumi* of a Gujrati version of certain portions of a letter forming a part of the booklet *A Phase of the Indian Struggle* to be a prejudicial report; and (2) a City Magistrate in Allahabad has held that "the book *A Phase of the Indain Struggle* is not a prejudicial report".

I am not aware of any judgment of the Allahabad High Court.

(*b*) Does not arise.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of the answer "a City Magistrate in Allahabad has held that 'the book A Phase of the Indian Struggle is not a prejudicial report' ", do the Government think it desirable to lift the ban?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The judgment of Magistrate of Allahabad was based on only a certain portion of the book and not on the book as a whole, and therefore the question does not arise.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: You have not given the answer that only a certain portion was considered about the Allahabad High Court?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is so.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Did you add that reply that only a portion of the book was considered by the Magistrate of Allahabad on receipt of fresh information?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes. It was only a portion of the booklet so far as the City Magistrate of Allahabad was concerned and it was the Gujrati translation of a part of the book which appeared in the Bombay newspapers and not the whole of it.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In the light of the findings of the Bombay High Court and the City Magistrate, Allahabad, will the Government consider the desirability of examining afresh whether the ban in Bengal has been rightly imposed?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It has been very carefully examined by the Government of Bengal. The version that was before the Bombay High Court was a translation of the original book and even the copy that was before the Bombay High Court was a translation from Gujrati into English and that translation does not exactly tally with the original book, and secondly, Sir, the opinion of the Judge of the Bombay High Court was that it is not prejudicial if circulated within the Province of Bombay, and therefore, the question of its effect, if circulated in the Presidency of Bengal, does not arise. Government carefully went into the whole question.

Granting of family allowance to Sj. Panchanan Bose.

23. Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware of the fact that—

(*i*) Sj. Panchanan Bose, B.L., pleader of Barisal, is interned and not allowed to practise in court;

(*ii*) he had a good income before his arrest with which he supported his family; and

(*iii*) he has applied for family allowance?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of granting him a suitable allowance?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) His income while practising as a pleader is not known.

(*iii*) Yes.

(*b*) An allowance has been granted.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will Government be pleased to state what is the amount of allowance granted to Srijut Panchanan Bose?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Rs. 15 per month.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহোদয় অনুগ্রহ করে বল্‌বেন কি, যে উকিল ব্যবসা ক'রে তার পরিবার প্রতিপালন করতেন তার আয় পনের টাকার বেশী ছিল না,—এইরূপ গভর্ণমেণ্টের ধার্য্য করা ঠিক হয়েছে কি?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question does not arise. That is only a matter of opinion. The allowance was allowed for the maintenance of his mother and not for his own maintenance.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Parliamentary Secretary be pleased to explain what he means by "His income while practising as a pleader is not known"? Did the Government try to ascertain his income?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is not possible for Government to try to ascertain the income of a pleader.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is it not a fact that one of the determining factors for determining the amount of allowance is the income of which the person detained or restrained is deprived?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is one of the considerations, but in this case the allowance has been granted to the mother of the security prisoner for her maintenance.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Is it not a fact that the security prisoner has got not only a mother but a wife and children also?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In view of the answer just now given, namely, that it is not possible to ascertain the income, do I understand the honourable member to say that no attempt was made to ascertain the income?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Attempts were made but it is not possible to correctly assess the income of a pleader.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: May I know what is the result of the attempt to assess the income?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government could not correctly arrive at any figure.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of the suggestion put forward by Mr. Das Gupta that the security prisoner has got a wife and children to maintain——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: He did not say that.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Yes, I did.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of that fact, do Government think it desirable to start a fresh enquiry and give him adequate allowance for maintaining his wife and children?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Government will do that.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

38—Medical.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Sir, it is not yet 3 o'clock. May I just draw your attention to the fact that the scheduled time for taking up this grant has been fixed at 3 p.m. to 3-45 p.m.?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: Will you kindly resume your seat, Dr. Sanyal? (Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal resumed his seat.)

As far as I know this matter was agreed to between the parties. I myself suggested that time should not be noted here. The whole idea was that the Assembly should sit at 2-15 p.m. and that no voting would take place before 3-45 p.m. That was the whole idea and it was thought that half an hour will be taken up by questions. That is why the time table was fixed at 3 p.m. to 3-45 p.m. It was not intended that any time of the House should be wasted. Every one of us is anxious to utilise the time of the House in full. Therefore, in view of this fact, I do not think it will be fair to raise any technical objection like this.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I draw your attention to the note that your office has circulated. It is also stated on the top of it that the time is subject to alterations as may be necessary to meet the exigencies of the case by the Hon'ble Speaker. Therefore it does not lie with any Hon'ble Minister of Government to say that he was not prepared——

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not bother yourself. Yes, Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin Ahmad.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 51,90,000 be granted for expenditure for the year 1943-44 under the head "38—Medical".

The total provision for expenditure under this head of Budget is Rs. 54,85,000 of which Rs. 51,90,000 is voted and Rs. 2,95,000 is charged on Provincial Revenues.

The actual expenditure during the last 4 years was as follows:—

Year.	Voted.	Charged.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1939-40	.. 49,97,000	6,36,000	56,33,000
1940-41	.. 50,94,000	5,41,000	56,35,000
1941-42	.. 49,16,000	3,75,000	52,91,000
1942-43	.. 51,47,000	2,66,000	54,13,000

There has been considerable and gradual decrease in the actual expenditure under charged items and this decrease may be explained as due mainly to the reversion of I.M.S. officers to military duty. There has also

been a noticeable increase under voted items of expenditure and this increase is mainly due to posting of voted officers in posts reserved for I.M.S. officers.

Sir, before I pass on to an explanation of the important items of expenditure in the Budget I would like in the first place to place before the honourable members the fact that it has not been possible for me during the few months since my assumption of duties to give a definite shape to our programme of work in respect of expansion and development of medical relief and medical education in the province. It must however be admitted that, in the emergent circumstances with which we are faced for the present expenditure for civil defence and for objects connected with the war has become imperative and a substantial portion of the available resources of the Provincial Government has to be earmarked for these purposes. This has a serious repercussion on the further development of all nation-building enterprises including the spread of medical education and improvement of the places for the treatment of the sick with the result that all new schemes for improvement and expansion have had to be postponed till after the normal times.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Are we to understand that the Hon'ble Minister is going to deliver a long speech at this stage because in that case, I am afraid, there will be no time. If the Hon'ble Minister now takes half an hour he may not have time afterwards to reply to various points that may be raised.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: I am thankful to Dr. Sanyal for his suggestion. I shall refer only very briefly to some of the important items for which provision has been made in the budget. If I do so, then some of the amendments I think may not be moved.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, if this is going to be the practice then each Minister may take half an hour.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the Hon'ble Minister will be very brief.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Yes, I shall be very brief.

A scheme of improvement of Sadar hospitals is under progress since 1938-39. Under this scheme Government have undertaken to make capital grants towards improvement of district sadar hospitals on condition that local bodies concerned meet a share (to be decided in each case) of the capital expenditure and the entire recurring expenditure in the scheme of improvement from local sources.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The scheme is 5 years old now and yet nothing has been done.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: For 4 years war has been going on——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: And therefore nothing will be done!

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: A total sum of Rs. 4,40,000 was provided for this purpose and the grants so far paid to the different hospitals amounted to Rs. 3,12,500 up to the end of 1942-43. The unspent balance, viz., Rs. 1,27,500 has been repeated in the present budget estimates. The policy of making grants to rural dispensaries at the rate of Rs. 500 for a thana and Rs. 250 for a village dispensary has been persistently followed. The normal provision for the purpose is Rs. 1,50,000 and an additional provision of Rs. 40,000 was made in the last year's budget against which the total expenditure actually amounted to about Rs. 2 lakhs. The excess was met by reappropriation. A similar provision of Rs. 1,90,000 has been made in this year's budget and I should repeat the assurance that all eligible dispensaries will be paid the usual grants this year irrespective of the budget provision.

It has also been decided to make an additional recurring grant of Rs. 50,000 to the Jadavpur Tuberculosis Hospital for maintenance of 50 additional free beds for tubercular patients.

I do not propose to take any further time of the House. With these few words, Sir, I commend this grant for the consideration of the House.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is in order to raise a discussion about the inadequacy of grant to the district and subdivisional hospitals.

Before I come to the actual question, Sir, I wish to draw the attention of this House and of the Hon'ble Minister pointedly to this fact that this year they have allotted money for hospitals and dispensaries which falls shorter by Rs. 30,000 than the provision of last year. It is a broad fact that the prices of medicines and other necessaries of life required for the patients in the hospitals have gone high at least by four hundred per cent., if not more. Everybody expected that the present Ministry would increase the amount for mufassal hospitals and dispensaries. Instead of doing that, the Hon'ble Minister has deemed it proper to reduce the grant. Out of a total sum of Rs. 27,57,500 allotted for hospitals and dispensaries, the Presidency hospitals and dispensaries are provided a sum of Rs. 17,30,100 whereas only Rs. 10,27,400 has been left for the mufassal hospitals and dispensaries. I do not contend, and I never contended, that this sum of money, viz., Rs. 17,30,100 is sufficient for the Presidency hospitals and dispensaries. But I would like to point out that knowing as they do the crying need of a larger provision for mufassal hospitals and dispensaries they have not cared to increase even by a single farthing the amount allotted for the Medical Department. As to the number of mufassal hospitals and dispensaries, I submit that in every district on an average there are about 15 hospitals and dispensaries including the subdivisional and sadar hospitals. These dispensaries get very little help from the provincial exchequer. In the mufassal, we have four kinds of hospitals and dispensaries, viz., sadar hospitals, subdivisional hospitals, thana

dispensaries and union board dispensaries. As regards union board dispensaries Government pay a flat rate of Rs. 250 every year per dispensary and to thana dispensaries Rs. 500 each. In the case of sadar and subdivisional dispensaries Government only pay the actual expenses towards medical attendance of Government servants and actual expenses for the diet money. The other sum that is allotted for sadar and subdivisional hospitals is to meet expenses in connection with police cases. It is a matter for great regret that in some districts for district hospitals and sadar hospitals Government do not pay more than Rs. 500 a year, even in these days when the prices of medicine have gone up so high and demands for hospital beds are very great. Everybody knows that even on the doors of hospitals some of the patients are dying of hunger, that is to say, starvation cases have increased at least by 100 per cent., within a month. Unfortunately, in most of these hospitals some of the beds are lying vacant for want of money to buy food, medicine, etc. As for example in the Rangpur Sadar Hospital there are arrangements for 60 beds. This year we have closed down 40 beds keeping only 20 beds for outside patients who come to get their admission in the hospital. There also we are not in a position to feed the patients sufficiently, not to speak of giving them medicine, according to requirements.

I draw the attention of the Government to this fact, particularly it is a matter for regret that starvation cases are not being admitted in the hospitals. Always medical officers and the Civil Surgeon complain that they cannot feed these patients. The Rangpur hospital, as I have pointed out, is running on a deficit of at least Rs. 5,000 this year. On the face of this the Rangpur District Board has to pay five to six thousand rupees annually to the Jalpaiguri Medical School and Hospital. We have always moved the Government to relieve the district board from these payments so that the money proposed to be released may be utilised for the improvement of other hospitals in the district, but unfortunately no heed has been given to our prayer. I submit very humbly that we want money for alleviating the sufferings of the poorer sections of the people, the patients that lie outside the presidency town and can get no medical treatment. No doubt some patients come to Calcutta but nowadays due to want and distress mufassal people are very seldom able to come to Calcutta to have their patients properly treated there. Therefore greater care should be given to mufassal hospitals and we should try to develop these hospitals. In sadar hospitals there is very seldom any arrangement for nurses, and *doms* and *mehtars* serve as nurses. These hospitals so badly require not only medicine and food but also nursing and care. Some money should therefore be allotted for each of these hospitals so that some arrangement for nursing can be made.

With these words, Sir, I commend my motion for the acceptance of the House.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by

Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the mal-administration of the Medical Department and the utter dislocation of medical service in the province, specially in respect of—

(*i*) the administration of the Surgeon-General's office;

(*ii*) the administration of the Provincial Medical Services;

(*iii*) the administration of the Calcutta Medical College, the Campbell Medical School and other teaching institutions;

(*iv*) the administration of hospitals and dispensaries in Calcutta and the mufassal;

(*v*) failure to utilise fully the grants for the improvement of sadar hospitals in the mufassal; and

(*vi*) failure to maintain and to extend medical services and treatment of the poorer sections of the people in the rural areas.

Sir, hardly any speech is needed today to bring it home to the Government and to members of the Government party the utter helplessness which the people of the province have been thrown into due to a thorough failure of the Medical Department in practically all its bearings. Sir, I will not indulge in a long speech as time will not permit and I will only draw your attention to a few specific and definite instances which will go to show how this failure has been all round and has been creating a havoc in the whole province.

Sir, in regard to the Surgeon-General's office with which I start, as you might be well aware, this has been practically a fifth wheel to the coach. The Surgeon-General's office has two parts now: one part is functioning from Rajshahi and the other is in Calcutta. The letters that have to be sent to various medical institutions from Government have to pass through the Surgeon-General's office and *vice versa*, and, Sir, they take inordinately long time and I do not know if any responsible mind is at all applied to such correspondence that pass through the agency of the Surgeon-General's office. There have been departments of Government which have practically become an *imperium in imperio*, but no department has assumed such proportion of abuse and inefficiency as the Surgeon-General's office has done. I will give one instance, namely, the case of one medical man, a reputed Surgeon of the Medical College, Dr. Panchanan Chatterjee. His term was supposed to have been extended at the end of December, 1941, for yet another year. He got the letter of extension after the extension was practically completed. In another instance it was brought to my notice that some students of the Campbell Medical School could not attend the institution on the first opening date, on the 2nd or 3rd January last year, because of the troubles created through the air raids in Calcutta. These medical students—some of them were girl students—were enjoying scholarships. Under certain technical rules their scholarships were stopped and they approached the Government with piteous appeals that although they were late by only one day they were neither given the scholarships nor were they permitted to go on with their study at the school because once the scholarships were stopped they were not allowed to attend classes and appear

at examinations. They appealed to the head of the institution, approached the Surgeon-General and for months and months they wrote correspondence and so on until they found themselves in a helpless position. They could neither attend their classes nor draw their scholarships and could not pay their fees nor their boarding charges. At this stage I had to intervene and I personally approached the Secretary of the Department and with great difficulty it could be arranged that these students should get their allowances and could continue their studies. These are two minor instances. There have been numerous other cases where you will find that the Surgeon-General's office has rather been a clog than a help. Sir, time has come to review the whole position. If there is a technical expert necessary in the shape of the Surgeon-General to scrutinise and examine how things are being managed in the Medical Department, there also, I submit, Sir, the Surgeon-General's office has failed miserably. Selections are made in the various medical services of persons for appointments, transfers and promotions, and posts are being allotted to particular individuals very often not on ground of merit but on other considerations. The result has been that in some of the premier educational institutions for imparting medical teaching as also for providing proper treatment of diseases there have been placed persons in charge who are very innocent of the special subjects which they have been asked to teach or for the special medical treatment that they are required to administer. There have been numerous cases of most inefficient and hopelessly unacquainted persons being given offices because these offices are going not on merit but on other considerations at the moment. I will not introduce any communal feeling, Sir, and I would like to point out this without the least disrespect to certain communities, because I know there have been cases of Hindu surgeons and doctors also involved in this. I can name one, Dr. S. C. Ghosh, who had retired long ago but has been again put on to some job in the Calcutta Medical College for some time. He has not been attending to his work, and for months together he goes on leave. Still he is there because he was a pet of a particular Minister in charge.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Ex-Minister.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: No, Sir.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, an ex-Minister but not Mr. Basu.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Generalisation is very dangerous.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, a small bird whispers that the post which Dr. Panchanan Chatterjee is holding—the post of the Professor of Clinical Surgery which has been his officiating post and not his substantive post of which his term has already expired,—and one does not know where Dr. Chatterjee is going after he finishes his officiating appointment at the present moment—is going to be taken up by a comparatively junior surgeon, a former Resident Surgeon of the Eden Hospital and at present the Police Surgeon.

(At this stage the blue light was lit.)

Sir, this is a comprehensive motion and I want ten minutes more.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, you go on.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Then, Sir, there is the reputed Surgeon Colonel Anderson, Professor of Surgery, who, I understand, never comes to the College before 11 a.m. He is supposed to teach the students in Surgery in the practical class but students have to attend their theoretical classes at 11 a.m., and he is supposed to come at 8 o'clock in the morning. Colonel Anderson is a big man busy with multifarious practice and he does not care to come at 8 a.m. Colonel Anderson is a retired I.M.S. man and this post of Professor of Surgery was at one time to be reserved for the I.M.S. Apart from the question of the justification of reservation of any post for the I.M.S. or others this post has been made specially available for Colonel Anderson although he has no more connection with the I.M.S. This keeps out the comparatively younger men who can shine in the line and create a mark in the respective departments if opportunities are given to them. Sir, I understand that this Colonel Anderson was given some extension in the past over the head of the Minister and in spite of the recommendation of the Minister, and at one time—I may draw attention to that also—Colonel Anderson could not for certain reasons attend to any operation at all because he could not open the gloves over his hands for certain disease which he was suffering from.

Sir, so far as teaching in the Medical College is concerned, the quality of teaching has deteriorated to such a hopeless extent that I do not know what will happen to the people of Bengal in future who will have to submit themselves to the care of the doctors that will come out of the Medical College during the next two or three years. Practical training has virtually come to a standstill. Sir, the Medical College Hospital has practically half its beds closed because they had to be kept reserved for A.R.P. work. There has been recently some improvement in this respect, because I know there has been some arrangement to release some of these beds for ordinary patients for the time being, but there are also certain departments like the Chest Department, one of the most important departments in the Medical College, where students are allotted to do work there but not a single patient is admitted to that department. Students go, smoke, chat, and come back. There is not a single patient in the department. (Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The department is closed.) The department is supposed to be closed but students are there and they are supposed to come out as successful students with experience in chest work also. Sir, all this has been done in spite of the recommendation of the Visiting Committee. That Committee definitely stated that without chest work the students of tomorrow will not learn anything. I do not know if the attention of the Hon'ble Minister has been drawn to this very important matter.

Sir, in the Medical College, hitherto, whenever there were new posts created or vacant they were filled up either by advertisement or by promotion from the rank of men of ability, but, Sir, last year a new post was created or rather two new posts were created and two new men were taken not on

the basis of advertisement and not on the basis of applications from meritorious persons but on other considerations—God alone knows what. (Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: You also know, I think.) I know, of course, but I am not in a position to state if the present Government did it or the past Government. I may refer to two cases; one is about the special department of heart for which the ex-Ministry appointed the son of Dr. Sir Upendra Nath Brahmachari as the Cardiologist, and the other is in the dental department for which also another person was appointed not through advertisement.

Now, Sir, as regards the beds in hospital, a large number of beds are filled by what are known as Board cases. Board cases mean cases which apparently have no diseases but which are referred by the Medical Board to be examined more thoroughly in the Medical College. As you know, Sir, when Government servants want to go on leave they have to apply for medical certificate and the Medical Board send them to the Medical College Hospital. Ninety per cent. of such Board cases do not show any ostensible disease and the results of observation still have to be taken. X'ray has to be taken, blood, sputum, urine have to be examined, because the Board want these things, but the students get no benefit out of them as they mostly reveal normal cases. Some of the Board cases have very interesting history. Once it happened in the case of Sir G. N. Roy, Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs, while he was serving as Postmaster-General, he applied for leave for six months and he was asked to appear before the Professor of Midwifery. To this Sir G. N. Roy wrote to the Chief Secretary that there was perhaps a mistake as the leave applied for was not by Mrs. Roy but by himself. It was then pointed out that the Professor of Midwifery was the Superintendent and he was a member of the Board, and therefore he had to go there. Such cases do very often happen.

Sir, the position in the Campbell Medical School is still worse. I have hardly any time to go into details but I may tell you definitely with all the sense of responsibility that I can command, that teaching has practically been non-existent in the Campbell Medical School for the last few months. So far as hospital work is concerned, God save those who happen to go there under the care of some of those doctors. The place is so ill-equipped both in personnel as well as in medicines that I cannot know how an institution of that character could be permitted to be maintained in the heart of Calcutta. Both in the Calcutta Medical College Hospital as well as in the Campbell Hospital important and essential medicines are not at all available; even medicines like M.B. 693 go out of stock for days together although that medicine is not really unavailable in the Calcutta market.

Sir, only yesterday we had a reply from the Government that the diet allowance of 12 annas only per head per day is still maintained. A diet allowance which was sanctioned and approved two years ago is still maintained although you are all aware the cost of living has gone up terribly. Milk is practically unavailable and what is available cannot sustain the patients. Even then the budget shows that the amount sanctioned for the Medical Department has not only not improved but it has really gone down.

In 1940-41 the total Medical grant was Rs. 56,35,000; this year the budget shows Rs. 54,13,000. What a shocking admission of hopeless inefficiency in the administration of the Medical Department as a whole!

Coming now to the sadar hospitals I have to invite your attention to the repeated failure not of this Government alone but of two previous Governments to utilise the grants made for improvement of sadar hospitals. If today it is said that there was war for the last three years, war has not really stopped every other important department's expenditure and it cannot be said that the sadar hospitals and the other hospitals in the mufassal have no important work to do even during war time! On the contrary, Sir, it is our report that many of them are still doing valuable work and are expected to do valuable work even in connection with the war. Some of them have had several seats and beds reserved for looking after war injuries, and yet, Sir, there is hardly any arrangement to improve their equipment, to give them up-to-date surgical instruments, to arrange for improved services and even to allow them the most elementary and common medicines, like quinine, which is so badly needed in the mufassal of Bengal.

Sir, I have invited your attention to various aspects of the problem and as I have already told you, it is not possible to give details of every one of these items. I shall therefore conclude by making an appeal to the House and to the Hon'ble Minister in charge to be more up and doing in this respect. Thousands are dying in the streets of Calcutta and throughout the province. Hardly any arrangement has been made to extend medical service to the mufassal. The Indian Medical Association, Calcutta, have submitted to Government a detailed scheme for quick and early improvement of the position. I would like to know what Government have done on this scheme. I appeal to Government and I impress upon them the urgent need of setting the House in order so far as the Medical Department is concerned.

Sir HARI SANKAR PAUL: Sir, I beg to move the motion that stands in my name, namely, that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about utter failure to give even last minute relief to persons dying of malaria, tuberculosis, hunger and starvation.

It is my intention today to draw immediate attention of the House to the utter failure of the Government and supreme callousness shown by them in the matter of providing relief to persons dying of malaria, tuberculosis, hunger and starvation. I confess this attitude on the part of the Government is quite consistent with the niggardly manner in which they have always treated the medical and public health budget of the province and the almost step-motherly treatment ever accorded to these two branches of one and the same function of the Government, viz., the improvement of the health and sanitation of the province. It is hardly necessary for me to stress the urgency of the work involved in the proposed grants particularly at a time when people in thousands are dying without any food or medical relief. No administration can claim to call itself civilised if it does not give attention to the paramount question of improving the health of the

people; the manner in which this matter has been ignored by the Government is almost criminal. I shall presently show with the help of figures how these two sections of the budget have been treated with meagre resources compared to our need. But before I do so, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that one of the reasons why the advent of the popular Ministry had been acclaimed was that henceforth the budget would gravitate more towards nation-building activities rather than spending its major portion on the costs of running the administration.

It was a standing grievance against the bureaucratic regime that sufficient money was not to be found for such useful activities which were then considered to be of secondary importance. The *raison d'etre* of a popular Government is that they would do away with such a tradition incompatible with all sense of progress and advancements in a province and try to shape the budget in such a manner that the money spent is made to yield the maximum return in the well-being of the people. If the Ministry do not follow such a course of action, they may be said to be failing in one of their essential duties. I am sure I shall not be misunderstood as indulging in these utterances in a carping spirit; what I say I do rather in a spirit of putting forward a constructive and helpful criticism in this connection. The budgeted expenditure under Medical and Public Health was 83 lakhs 19 thousand in 1937-38 and 95 lakhs 85 thousand in 1942-43 against the total revenue expenditure of 11 crores 83 lakhs 13 thousand and 16 crores 73 lakhs 16 thousand working out a percentage of about 7·03 and 5·4 respectively. Therefore, it is not much encouraging to find that for 1943-44 the budgeted expenditure under these two heads is only 95 lakhs 1 thousand against the total revenue expenditure of 25 crores 80 lakhs 57 thousand working out a percentage of even less than 4 per cent.

Sir, from these figures, it will be realised that the tone of the budget so far as these two important heads are concerned has not changed for the better which we so much expected. In fact, its complexion may be said to have deteriorated particularly when we look from the angle of the increase in the total expenditure on revenue account from 11·8 crores in 1937-38 to 25·8 crores in 1943-44. Putting it more clearly and briefly, I may say that out of a total increased expenditure of 14 crores a meagre sum of about Rs. 12 lakhs only has been allotted for these two heads. Or, in other words, out of every one hundred rupees of increased expenditure since the inauguration of provincial autonomy the Government have spent not even one rupee for the improvement of the health and sanitation of the province. Nobody would perhaps deny, Sir, that one of the crying needs of the hour is that medical relief on a larger scale should be provided for the disease-stricken, half-fed and ill-clad dumb millions of the province. Under the old regime total grants under these two heads amounted to about 7 per cent. of the total revenue budget; we all, therefore, expected that the popular Ministry would be able to at least increase the proportion out of their increased expenditure. That is, a greater proportion of more money available to the Government would be allotted for nation-building services. But such a hope has been belied in our experience. This is all the more deplorable

when we remember that most of this increased expenditure has been provided for by increased taxation of the already heavily taxed people of Bengal. I cannot therefore, Sir, reconcile myself to the loud claims and professions, made by the Ministry, of their solicitude for the people.

Sir, I would now point to a very sad state of affairs in the administration of this department in that, meagre as the grants have been, some provisions had to be surrendered owing to their non-utilisation or partial utilisation. I would, in particular, mention the case of the sadar hospitals. Provisions are made in every year for the improvement of the sadar hospitals, but at the close of the year refunds have to be made for non-utilisation of the budgeted sum. In 1939-40 out of a provision of Rs. 2·1 lakhs for improvement of sadar hospitals, not more than Rs. 1·2 lakhs could be spent during the year, as all schemes had not yet been fully worked out. Similarly in 1940-41 there was a saving of Rs. 80 thousand out of a total provision of Rs. 90 thousand for the same purpose, the reason being that the schemes of improvement did not mature during the year. A provision of Rs. 2·2 lakhs was also made in 1942-43 for the improvement of sadar hospitals. The actuals for 1942-43 show that out of the budgeted provision Rs. 1 lakh 27 thousand could not be utilised. This shows the paucity of brains in high quarters which could not formulate in course of the last five years any suitable scheme for the development and improvement of our sadar hospitals, although their improvement is a paramount necessity of the province. Again, Sir, you are aware that dispensaries are few and far between in rural areas. The necessity for more such dispensaries goes without saying. Regarding the establishment of union board dispensaries in the mufassal the Government had assured us in 1941-42 that they were going to establish one dispensary in every two unions and that the proposal had almost matured. But so far nothing has been done in this regard, and we should like to know at what stage the matter lies now.

Sir, before I conclude I feel I must refer to the terrible scourges that have been eating into the vitals of the people of this province, I mean the two dangerous diseases, tuberculosis and malaria. The Government have a clear duty before them and that is to address themselves with a stronger will and more intensified efforts to the task of minimising the extent of their ravages too terrible at present for words. It is somewhat re-assuring that measures have been initiated by different powerful agencies to render relief to the T. B. sufferers and the contemplated expansion of the Jadavpur Sanatorium by adding 50 more beds is come not a day too soon. Of course this extension is too insignificant when we look at it against the background of the widespread nature of the disease in the province. Still I welcome it as a move just in the right direction. How much we wish that a few equally worthy institutions of repute like the Austanga Ayurvedic T. B. Hospital that have been rendering very valuable services in this direction should have been more encouraged and helped in their strenuous activities with some grant in their favour. Then again, I do not find words to adequately convey my sense of horror at the increasingly dismal prospect of all useful activities being seriously impeded and held up due to the alarming scarcity of quinine

in the province which is, by the way, the most malaria-ridden area in the country. Times are difficult no doubt for making quinine available to meet enormous and usual demand of the province, but the present quota allocated to Bengal by the Central Government is ridiculously low on the very face of it. It is up to the Bengal Government to immediately take up this urgent matter with the Central Government and strongly urge for an increased quota for Bengal's consumption. Then again, it is an irony of fate that particularly at this juncture when import of the stuff is most needed to supplement the local scanty stock, it has been rendered impossible to go in for that. India Government won't give permit to import unless the exporting country is approached and is agreeable to ship whereas the exporting country when approached refer the importers to the India Government to first get import permit. Thus driven from pillar to post and post to pillar the importers here have to sink down in disappointment and disgust. Further imports, if in any way received, have to meet the saddest fate of being frozen by the Government. What shall we then do? Will the scourge of malaria be allowed a fuller scope in its ravages? Unless immediate action is taken it is too apparent to need any further comment that the Government will be faced with a situation completely out of their control in which no amount of their pious wishes and sympathetic utterances will be of any avail.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the negligence of the Government to supply proper quantity of medicine specially quinine to hospitals and charitable dispensaries in the province.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, এই সম্পর্কে বলতে গেলে বহু কথা বলতে হয় এবং বহু ঔষধের নাম করতে হয়। বর্ত্তমানে যে রকম অবস্থা দাঁড়িয়েছে তাতে লোকের অসুখবিসুখে চিকিৎসার এমন বিশৃঙ্খলা জন্মিতেছে যে কোন ঔষধ বাজারে পাওয়া যায় না ও ডাক্তারখানায়ও পাওয়া যায় না। কলকাতার Carmichael Collegeএ operation কিছুদিন বন্ধ ছিল, শুধু কতকগুলি ঔষধের অভাবে। Carmichael College যখন Supply Officeএর কাছে সেই ঔষধ চাইলে, তার উত্তর পেল কলকাতা থেকে যে তারা Military supply করে, এখন তা দিতে পারছে না। Carmichael Medical Collegeএ যখন operation বন্ধ থাকে, তখন মফঃস্বলের হাসপাতাল ও Charitable Dispensaryর অবস্থা যে কি তা সহজেই অনুমেয়। আমাদের সবচেয়ে বড় জিনিষ—মফঃস্বলের জন্য—quinine. সেই quinine গভর্ণমেণ্ট প্রকৃতভাবে supply করতে পারছে না। প্রত্যেকটি Charitable Dispensaryতে ৫।৬ পাউণ্ড quinine দেওয়া হলেও উহাতে বৎসরের ছয় মাস চলবে না কোন dispensaryর। আমি তাই এই cut motion দ্বারা গভর্ণমেণ্টের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি। যাহাতে নাকি এখনি সমস্ত Charitable Dispensary ও হাসপাতালগুলিতে উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ ঔষধ প্রেরিত হয়, গভর্ণমেণ্ট সেদিকে দৃষ্টিপাত করেন। Quinineএর অভাবে মফঃস্বলের চিকিৎসার যে অবস্থা দাঁড়িয়েছে—লোকজন মরে যাচ্ছে; quinineএর অভাবে দেশ ম্যালেরিয়ায় পেয়ে বসেছে—গভর্ণমেণ্ট সেদিকে চোখ দিচ্ছেন না। Quinine পাবার ব্যবস্থা নেই। অথচ অন্য

সে রকম কোন ঔষধ বের করা—যা সেই quinineএর কাজ করবে—তারও কোন ব্যবস্থা করা হয় না। তারপর আমার বলবার কথা হচ্ছে এই, যে কোন হাসপাতালে যান, আপনারা পাবেন না ঔষধ, পাবেন না seat, পাবেন না কোন প্রকার ব্যবস্থা। বাংলার গভর্ণমেণ্ট এইভাবে দাতব্য চিকিৎসালয় এবং হাসপাতালগুলির দিকে অত্যন্ত callous হয়ে পড়েছেন; তাঁরা অন্য বিষয় নিয়ে ব্যস্ত, অথচ দেশের লোকের চিকিৎসার কোনও সুব্যবস্থা হচ্ছে না। আমি তাই এই Houseএর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করে বলতে চাই গভর্ণমেণ্ট যেন উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ ঔষধ উপযুক্ত সময়ে সমস্ত হাসপাতাল ও দাতব্য চিকিৎসালয়ে পাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করে দেন, তাহলে আমাদের উপকার হবে এবং দেশের লোক বাঁচবে।

Mr. Speaker, Sir, বর্ত্তমানে যে খাদ্য-সমস্যা উপস্থিত হয়েছে, তাহাতে এমনি লোকের stamina কমে গিয়েছে। খাদ্য নেই, পথ্য নেই, ঔষধ নেই, চিকিৎসার ব্যবস্থা নেই। লোক বাঁচবে কি করে? কিন্তু তাতেও তবু কতক বাঁচত যদি আবশ্যক ঔষধপত্র থাকত। কোন বন্ধু বলছেন—বাঁচার কোন দরকার নেই। সেটাই হচ্ছে খাঁটি কথা। পরাধীন দেশে বাঁচবার দরকার নেই কোন লোকের, কিন্তু যখন জন্মেছি তখন বাঁচবার অধিকার সকলের আছে বলে মনে করি। আমি সেজন্য গভর্ণমেণ্টকে বলি, যাতে লোকে বাঁচে, তাদের চিকিৎসা হয়, তারা ঔষধ পত্রাদি পায়, সেদিকে গভর্ণমেণ্ট দৃষ্টি করুন। শুধু গভর্ণমেণ্ট চালালে হবে না; লোককেও বাঁচাতে হবে। এই আমার শেষ কথা।

Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the Government's policy regarding the supply of quinine in the province of Bengal.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, সর্ব্বত্র, কি সহরে কি পল্লীতে, Dispensary এবং হাসপাতালে এবং যাঁরা এই সব জায়গায় যান বা সেখানে চিকিৎসা করেন প্রত্যেকের কাছে শুনতে পাওয়া যায় এই অভিযোগ যে quinineএর অত্যন্ত অভাব এবং সেজন্য তাঁরা চিকিৎসা করার সুবিধা হতে বঞ্চিত। অথচ "Calcutta Gazette"এ প্রত্যেকবার এই report দেওয়া হয় quinine সম্বন্ধে যে তাঁরা সর্ব্বত্র quinine বিতরণ করতে প্রস্তুত আছেন এবং তার মূল্যও সেখানে নির্দ্ধারিত আছে। সাধারণ Quinine Sulphate তার দাম ৩৭৲ টাকা পাউণ্ড। কিন্তু এ quinine সরকারের জন্য। আমি নিজে কিছুদিন আগে quinineএর জন্য দরখাস্ত করেছিলাম। সেখান থেকে চিঠি পেলাম যে আমাকে District Magistrate-এর কাছে দরখাস্ত করতে হবে। District Magistrateএর কাছে দরখাস্ত করাতে তিনি বললেন যে তাঁর যে নিযুক্ত সরকারী store-keeper আছেন অর্থাৎ stockist of quinine in the place তাঁর কাছে approach করা দরকার। তাঁর কাছে approach ক'রে জানা গেল যে, quinine সাধারণতঃ সহরের ডাক্তারদের এইভাবে দেওয়া হয়: তাঁরা prescription ক'রলে পরে (প্রতি মাত্রায় চার grain হিসাবে) সেই quinine prescription অনুযায়ী তাঁরা quinine supply করবেন এবং সে quinineএর মূল্য পড়বে ৮৮৲ টাকা পাউণ্ড। কাজেই ৩৭৲ টাকা মূল্যের জিনিষ যা অল্প কিছু পাওয়া যায়, সেটাও আমাদের এই নূতন Governmentএর policy অনুযায়ী আমাকে বাধ্য হয়ে কিনতে হবে ৮৮৲ টাকা পাউণ্ডে। এই প্রথা চলে আসছে। তাও যদি সহজে পাওয়া যেত তাহলেও

কাজের অনেক সুবিধা হতো ; কিন্তু সহজে পাবার কোন উপায় নেই। মফঃস্বলে যে সমস্ত চিকিৎসক স্বাধীনভাবে চিকিৎসা করেন তাঁদের বহুদূর থেকে এই রকমভাবে দরখাস্ত ক'রে দুই দিন, তিন দিন, চার দিন আনাগোনা করে, এখানে ওখানে permissionএর জন্য এ দরজা, ও দরজা ঘুরে হয়ত পাঁচ পাউণ্ড চাওয়ার পর সেখানে এক পাউণ্ড quinine তাঁরা কোন রকমে সংগ্রহ করে দুই একটা বাড়ীতে তাঁরা চিকিৎসা করেন। এই quinine, যে জিনিষটি আমাদের নিত্য প্রয়োজনীয়, সাধারণতঃ malaria'র এক মাত্র প্রতিষেধক এবং চিকিৎসার উপায়। সেই quinine সম্বন্ধে যদি Governmentএর এইরূপ ঔদাসীন্য এবং এই রকম বিশৃঙ্খলতা হয়ে থাকে তাহলে একথা বলতে হয় যে দেশে চিকিৎসা অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়ছে। আজ চিকিৎসা করা অত্যন্ত অসম্ভব; কেন না সাধারণতঃ খাদ্য-সঙ্কটের পরে মানুষের জীবনীশক্তি দিন দিন হ্রাস হয়ে যাচ্ছে। তারা খেতে পায় না, ব্যারাম হলে চিকিৎসা পেতে পারে না, এবং তার সঙ্গে সঙ্গে সরকারের এই ঔদাসীন্যে দিন দিন মানুষের জীবনধারণ কষ্টকর ক'রে তুলেছে এবং তার সাথে সাথে malariaও চারিদিকে বেড়ে চলেছে। সুতরাং এর মাঝখানেতে মানুষকে যদি বাঁচতে হয় এ সমস্ত রোগের হাত থেকে যদি নিষ্কৃতি পেতে হয়, তার ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে। চিকিৎসার যা কিছু উপায় ছিল তাও পর্য্যন্ত শেষ হতে বসেছে। একে ত দুর্মূল্য এবং দুষ্প্রাপ্য, তার উপর ঔষধের যথেষ্ট অভাবও হয়েছে। তাছাড়া Governmentএর policy যেভাবে quinine সরবরাহের জন্য ব্যবস্থা করেছেন এতে বিশৃঙ্খলা বাড়বেই। সময়মত এবং উচিত মূল্যে জিনিষ পাবার কোন উপায় নাই। এ অবস্থায় কি করে Government সুব্যবস্থা করতে পারেন সে বিষয় তাঁদের বিশেষ করে চিন্তা করা দরকার। এত বড় একটা আবশ্যকীয় জিনিষ যা না হলে চলে না। বাংলা দেশে বিশেষতঃ আমাদের এই পশ্চিম বঙ্গে প্রায় সর্ব্বত্র malariaর প্রকোপ আছে এবং দিন দিন বেড়ে চলেছে এবং পূর্ব্ব বঙ্গেও কিছু আছে এবং বহু জায়গায় এই malaria বেড়ে যাচ্ছে। কাজেই এই অবস্থায় যদি কোন ভাল সুযোগ সুবিধা না করে দিতে পারেন, এবং কোন ব্যবস্থা না করে দিতে পারেন, তাহলে মানুষ মৃত্যুমুখে দিন দিন এত বেশী পড়বে যে তার আর কোন ইয়ত্তা করতে পারা যাবে না। আমি Governmentএর কাছে অনুরোধ করছি যে সুবিবেচনা করে তাঁরা যেন কাজ চালান। আজ যদি Government একটু দয়া করে চিন্তা করে দেখেন এবং কোথায় কি অভাব অভিযোগ আছে সেকথা ভাল করে শোনেন এবং সেদিকে দৃষ্টি রেখে তাদের একটু সুবিধা করে দেবার চেষ্টা করেন তাহলে দেশের লোকের অনেক উপকার হতে পারে। তা না হলে এইটুকুই বুঝবো যে এই দুর্দ্দিনে, এই খাদ্য-সঙ্কটের দিনেতে, বহু লোককেই মৃত্যুর জন্য প্রস্তুত হয়ে থাকতে হবে সে বিষয়ে কোন সন্দেহ নাই। এই কথা বলে আমি cut motion আনছি।

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: With regard to the observations made by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal, I am in general agreement with much of what he has said. It is not for me to defend the policy and the actions of Government at this stage. There is only one statement he has made, evidently due to lack of correct information, about the appointment of the Cardiologist in the Medical College Hospital. He has said that I had made the appointment. I want to state categorically that the order for the appointment had been made long before I came into office. The only part I had to play with regard to this matter was that I had to allot the duties of this particular officer and I thought it proper on the recommendation of

the Secretary of the Department that he should be placed under the supervision of the Professor of Medicine, Dr. M. N. De. That is how the matter came to me and that is how I dealt with it.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, so far as I could follow the speeches of the honourable members who have just now spoken, their attention was mainly concentrated on the question of inadequate supply of quinine, and I should therefore deal with this question first. Honourable members are well aware that since the war there has been shortage of quinine and after the Japanese came into the war the question of shortage has been very acute. Now, the position is that not only the Government of Bengal alone but the Government of India also are suffering from want of quinine, and we have got to be satisfied with a limited supply. Nevertheless, we are trying our utmost to increase the supply of quinine which we produce locally by co-ordination in the activities of both the Forest and the Medical and Public Health Departments. With a view to effect proper distribution of quinine throughout the province we have introduced rationing for the whole province. So far as Calcutta is concerned the distribution is made through the agency of the Public Health Department; so far as the districts are concerned, there the distribution is made through the agencies of Civil Surgeons and the district boards. In case there is any complaint about the inadequate supply we send quinine from our own stock, if possible. In spite of all that has been done by Government, Sir, I must, however, admit that Government have not been able to meet the real demand of quinine that the province requires. Circumstanced as we are it is very difficult to meet our requirements of quinine; it is very difficult to combat malaria which is now raging in Midnapore since the last terrible cyclone, requiring perhaps the largest amount of quinine. Malaria is now rampant in various other places which urgently require quinine. We have been doing our utmost to make adequate allotments. Even in Calcutta there is a large demand for quinine. I know the Islamia Hospital with the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ameer Ali as the President of its Committee of Management is catering for a large number of patients and we made an allotment of quinine to be required for that hospital, on the basis of average number of malaria patients in that hospital requiring quinine. We gave the full quota of the allotment made for that hospital but it was found to be quite insufficient and they asked for more. When an additional allotment was made, that too was found to be inadequate and the hospital authorities asked for still more. I am quite sure that that hospital is in difficulty about its requirements of quinine. The same is the case elsewhere, but I can assure you, Sir, that we are trying our very best to get supplies from outside the province and also to increase our own cinchona production.

Then, Sir, Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar has made some suggestions. I could not follow his entire speech. I think Mr. Sarkar and Dr. Sanyal have raised the question of diseases resulting from starvation and have complained that we have made no arrangement for the treatment of such diseases. I can assure them and other honourable members of the House that we have

already taken some steps and are taking more for the treatment of diseased men, women and children as a result of starvation. We have established several hospitals in and around Calcutta for the proper treatment and feeding of hungry and diseased people. The Behala Hospital is one of them which is doing immense service to the cause of suffering humanity. The Campbell Hospital and other hospitals are also admitting famished patients who are receiving adequate treatment and food there. I understand the Revenue Department has taken responsibility of providing for the treatment as well as for feeding these famished people. Government have issued a circular instructing the Civil Surgeons and the District Magistrates to take famished patients into hospitals who have been asked to extend their operations in this direction to the remotest rural areas. Wherever there are gruel kitchens Government have asked the District Magistrates to visit those areas and have temporary sheds erected there which will serve hospital purposes for the treatment of famished patients. Today also my Secretary and the Director of Public Health have decided to start as many hospitals as possbile and we have informed the local officers that Government are prepared to spend as much money as possible, anticipating sanction of Government later on——

Maulvi ABU HOSAIN SARKAR: May I know when this circular was issued?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: The first circular was issued on the 14th September and after that I have issued instructions addressed to the Surgeon-General to make the District Magistrates extend their operations in this direction without being handicapped for finance which has been promised to them. I hope this will satisfy my friend, Sir Hari Sankar Paul, and I can assure, Sir, that so long as I am in charge of this department I shall see that people do not die of diseases resulting from starvation. So long as I am in charge of the Medical and Public Health Department I shall see that although there might be cases of starvation and some deaths, every possible care is taken in rural areas to give help as much as possible. One of our difficulties is about the paucity of doctors. Unfortunately for Bengal the number of qualified registered doctors is very few. The number of registered doctors is not sufficient to cope with this huge and gigantic problem of giving relief to these destitute patients in those temporary hospitals and sheds. But we have instructed District Magistrates to recruit locally private practitioners as much as possible and if they fail to do it, to write to us and we will see what we can do. We might be in difficulty on account of the paucity of doctors, but I can assure the House that we shall do as much as possible to improve the situation.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: On a point of information, Sir. May I have one information from the Hon'ble Minister through you, Sir? Mufassal hospitals are managed by committees and they do all the financing. Have special instructions been issued to District Magistrates to make special grants to those committees?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: My friend who is the Chairman of a District Board knows that sadar hospitals get the services of Civil Surgeons and some Assistant Surgeons. Civil Surgeons have been asked to do as much as possible. District Magistrates have also been asked to render as much help as possible.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: But who will pay the expenses?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Government will pay the expenses.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Through what agency?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Through the District Magistrate's agency. We have asked District Magistrates to spend money in anticipation of final sanction under Treasury order No. 27. So in that respect there will be no difficulty because adjustments will be made afterwards.

With regard to the improvement of sadar hospitals, I need not say much. There was recently a scheme prepared for the improvement of sadar hospitals. There were some conditions attached, one of them being that local bodies would contribute a share of the capital expenditure. Unfortunately the Government scheme has not been utilised in full by the sadar hospitals and we have spent as much as possible in places where contributions have been received from local bodies. Of course, it is true that we are handicapped in improving sadar hospitals as much as we like. Not only I but everyone in this House, either in the Opposition or on the Government side, wants that there should be as many hospitals as possible in this province as the sadar hospitals alone are not sufficient to meet the stiuation. But our resources are limited. Much of our money is spent in civil defence works and in works connected with war and this budget has really been prepared by my friend Mr. Basu. Limited as our resources are, we could not provide for more hospital improvements than we have been able to do. There is an unspent balance of Rs. 1,27,500. This is quite sufficient because even in normal conditions local bodies have not been able to avail themselves of this grant. So, I think this money will be sufficient for the improvement of hospitals.

With regard to Dr. Sanyal's comprehensive resolution, he has accused Government of maladministration. He has made charges against efficiency and treatment in the Medical College Hospitals and also against efficiency and teaching in the Campbell Medical School. To strengthen his case, he has said that the provision that has been made this year is really very inadequate although in 1941-42 the amount was much larger. My friend perhaps did not listen to me when I moved my demand for the Medical Department. At that time I said that there has been some decrease in the charged expenditure on account of the drafting of I. M. S. officers to war services but there has been an increase in the voted expenditure. If my friend compares the figures he will find it out. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Would you kindly look into the figures at page 5 under "Medical"

Rs. 56,35,000 in 1940-41?) That is the total. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, in the total there has been a reduction.) But that is no loss to us but that is a gain because I. M. S. officers have been drafted for military services and B. M. S. officers have taken their places. So, there is a reduction in charged expenditure and an increase in the voted. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Your figures are not consistent with what is printed and made available to us.) In 1940-41 the voted figure amounted to Rs. 50,94,000 and the charged amounted to Rs. 5,41,000 and the total was Rs. 56,35,000 while in 1942-43 the voted figure amounted to Rs. 51,47,000 and the charged amounted to Rs. 2,66,000 and the total was Rs. 54,13,000. So, although the total figure in 1942-43 is less than that in 1940-41, that does not affect the nation-building purposes because the excess amount represents the amount paid to the I. M. S. officers in 1940-41. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In any case, the total has gone down. That is my submisison.) You wanted to make out that less provision has been made. That is due to the accidental fact that I. M. S. officers have been drafted for military services and in their places B. M. S. officers have been taken.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. You had ruled that these questions as a rule should be asked when the Minister has finished.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have stopped him.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: My friend has raised some questions with regard to maladministration. I am not aware of them. It appears my friend Dr. Sanyal seems to know more than we know. If such cases are brought to my notice I will look into them But I can tell my friend that the Surgeon-General's office has now got a Deputy Surgeon-General. So, with the appointment of the Deputy Surgeon-General, the work of the Surgeon-General will be less and he will be able to give more time and attention to the administrative side of his work. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Abolish the office altogther. That is the fifth wheel to the coach.) I do not think you will agree if I do.

With regard to the question of teaching, I do not think that teaching in the Medical College has deteriorated. During the last five or six months that I have been in charge of this department, I have been very scrupulous and I can say that merit is always considered in cases of promotion or appointment to these services in the Medical College—even in cases of appointment to honorary posts such as Honorary Surgeons this is considered. I do not know anything about the appointment to the post of the Professor of Cardiology. That was done during the regime of the last Ministry. Whether he is sufficiently qualified or not, I will look into the matter. With regard to the appointment of the Rai Bahadur, that was also done long before. So far as I find he is qualified.

I can make one apology on behalf of the past Government. These doctors have been taken because of the dearth of experienced men who have

been drafted to military services. We cannot afford to lose the services of competent surgeons at this stage. I shall certainly bear in mind this fact. After all, it is a nation-building department.

With these remarks, Sir, I hope that my honourable friends will withdraw their motions.

The motion of Dr. Sharat Chandra Mukherji that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Charu Chandra Roy that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Sir Hari Sankar Paul that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar that the demand of Rs. 51,90,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad that a sum of Rs. 51,90,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "38—Medical", was then put and agreed to.

39—Public Health.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 39,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health".

Babu ASHUTOSH MALLICK: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to take steps against the outbreak of malaria in epidemic form throughout the province of Bengal, specially in the district of Bankura and consequent deaths, and the failure of Government to supply quinine in the malaria-affected areas at a price which the poor workers and peasants can pay and failure to produce sufficient quinine in Bengal.

Sir, সময় না থাকায় আমি আমার প্রস্তাব কোন কিছু না বলে formally House এর সম্মুখে place করছি।

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about utter indifference for the health of the public, dead bodies eaten by jackals, insanitary condition everywhere.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, আমাদের দেশে যখন লোকের বসন্ত হয়, তখন লোকে বলে যে দেবতার কৃপা হয়েছে এবং সেই দেবতাটী হচ্ছেন শীতলা দেবী। আর তার বাহন হচ্ছে গর্দ্দভ। আমাদের বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট যখন গরীবের উপর দয়া করে চাল কিনেন, সঙ্গে সঙ্গে চাল বাজার থেকে উধাও হয়ে যায়। আর তারা দয়া করে জিনিষের দাম কমাবার জন্য যখন price control করেন, সঙ্গে সঙ্গে price একেবারে দেড়গুণ দুগুণ বেড়ে যায়। কাজেই আমাদের দেশের সকল লোক আজ এই দেবতাদের কাছ থেকে তাদের দয়া থেকে নিষ্কৃতি চাচ্ছে। বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্ট এবং বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের বাহন যে মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী—তা ঠিক উপযুক্তই হয়েছে। যোগ্যম্ যোগ্যেন যুজ্যতে। এখানে সেদিন প্রশ্ন হয়েছে যে শ্যামাপ্রসাদ এখানে মন্ত্রিত্ব করতে আসেন কেন? সেটা খুব অন্যায় করেছে, কারণ যে জাতীয় বাহন হওয়া দরকার সেটা না হয়ে যদি ব্যাঘ্র বা সিংহ হয় তবে খাপ খায় না। কাজেই শ্যামাপ্রসাদ, ফজলল হক বা তাদের মত আর কেহ এই গভর্ণমেণ্টের সঙ্গে মন্ত্রিত্বের আসনে বসে ঠিক মিল খাইয়ে চল্‌তে পারবেন না, তাদের চলে আসতেই হবে। কাজেই আমি সর্ব্বান্তঃকরণে বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীকে সমর্থন করছি। (Cheers)। কারণ তারা এই গভর্ণমেণ্টের যোগ্য মন্ত্রীই হয়েছেন। এখন প্রশ্ন হচ্ছে এই যে যদি তাদের সে যোগ্যতা না থাক্‌ত তাহলেও কোন আপত্তি ছিল না। কিন্তু তাদের কৃপা এমন অজস্রভাবে দেশের উপর বর্ষিত হচ্ছে যে চারিদিকে হাহাকার লেগে গেছে—কোথায়ও বাজারে চাল পাওয়া যায় না। তার ফলে হয়েছে—এ ২ দিন আগের একটা উদাহরণ দিচ্ছি —বরিশাল সহরে ৭।৮ দিন পর্য্যন্ত লোকে চাল পাচ্ছে না। একজন উকিল Magistrateএর কাছে গিয়ে বল্‌লেন আমরা তিন দিন যাবত ভাত খেতে পাচ্ছি না। তখন বরিশালের ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেট সাহেব, Mr. Palmer—অবশ্য দেশবাসী সকলে তাকে বলে পামর সাহেব, আমি এখানে বাংলায় পামর বলছি না—সেই পামর সাহেব বল্‌লেন, কি করব, চাল নেই, তোমরা চাল খুঁজে নেও। যখন দেখা গেল বগার গোলায় এবং খেপুপাড়ায় গভর্ণমেণ্টের অনেক সঞ্চিত চাল আছে seal করা, তখন বল্‌লে যে ঐ চাল ত তোমাদের জন্য নয়। কাজেই প্রথমে চাল চাইলে চাল খুঁজে দেখ্‌তে বলে; আর দেখিয়ে দিলে বলে, ঐ চাল তোমাদের নয়। কাজেই কোথায়ও চাল পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না। যাদের টাকা আছে, তারা টাকা দিয়েও যখন পায় না, সেখানে যারা গরীব, কাঙ্গাল, তারা পাবে কোথা থেকে! আজ যে সমস্ত kitchen খোলা হয়েছে, সেখানে আড়াই ছটাক দেওয়া হচ্ছে, সেখানে যারা খেতে পারছে, তারা অন্নাহার জন্য এবং সেখানেও বজরা প্রভৃতি দেওয়ার জন্য ব্যাধিগ্রস্ত হয়ে বহুলোক রাস্তায় মরে পড়ে আছে। গ্রামে বহু লোক রাস্তায় পড়ে আছে। থানায় খবর দিতে গেলে তারা খবর নেয় না। যদি বলা হয়, তোমরা খবর নেও না কেন? বলে, আমাদের চাকুরি থাক্‌বে না। শিয়াল কুকুরে খাবে—কোন খবর নেবে না। কোন Medical Officer সেখানে নেই—সেখানে চারিদিকে মড়া, পচা শব একটা বিষাক্ত আবহাওয়া সৃষ্টি করলে তা দূর করবার জন্য কোন ব্যবস্থা নেই। তারা এজাহার পর্য্যন্ত নেবে না—সংবাদ পর্য্যন্ত নেবে না। এই অবস্থা দাঁড়িয়েছে। কলকাতায় আজকাল যদিও কিছু কিছু ব্যবস্থা চলেছে, তবুও কলকাতার রাস্তায় চলাফেরা এক-প্রকার অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়েছে। এই যে বাহির থেকে শত শত, লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক কলিকাতা সহরে এসে ভিড় করছে, তাদের মলমূত্র দ্বারা রাস্তা এমনি অপরিষ্কার হয়ে থাকে—আপনাদের যাদের motor গাড়ী আছে, তারা হয় ত বুঝতে পারবেন না কিন্তু আমাদের মত লোকের যাদের motor car নেই, তাদের অবস্থা অত্যন্ত সঙ্গীন হয়ে উঠেছে। কাজেই আমি বলছি গভর্ণমেণ্টের কাছে, এই যে অত্যন্ত গুরুতর জরুরি বিষয়—সেই public healthর

জন্য যে টাকা তারা দিচ্ছেন, তার চেয়ে অন্ততঃ চার গুণ টাকা যদি না দেন, তাহলে লোক যে শুধু ওষুধ না খেয়ে মরবে তা নয়, এই না খাওয়ার জন্য মৃত শবের দ্বারা যখন দেশ আকীর্ণ হবে, তখন মহামারির সৃষ্টি হয়ে বাংলার শত শত, কোটি কোটি লোক ধ্বংসের মুখে পতিত হবে।

Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about—

(1) the failure of the Government in the matter of water-supply in rural areas;

(2) the inefficiency of the sanitary inspectors and corruption prevailing among them;

(3) failure of the Government to supply quinine to private practitioners, in sufficient quantities as well as to the rural hospitals under the district board and union boards; and

(4) failure to supply sufficient quantities of cholera and typhoid vaccines for prevention of epidemics arising out of bad food, taken by the masses in the present days of acute food problem.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, দেশের এই দুর্দ্দিনে খাদ্যসঙ্কটের সাথে সাথে সকল দিকেই বিষম সঙ্কট উপস্থিত হইয়াছে। সকল বিভাগীয় সরকারী কর্ম্মচারিগণ কোথা হইতে যেন একটা অবাধ হুকুম লইয়া এই মহা সুযোগে উপরি পাওনার জন্য বিশেষভাবে যত্নবান হইয়া যতটুকু কর্ত্তব্য অন্য সময়ে পালন করিতেন এখন বেপরোয়াভাবে তাহাতে শৈথিল্য এবং অবজ্ঞা প্রকাশ করিতেছেন। আমাদের দেশে একটা প্রচলিত কথা আছে, "একজনের সর্ব্বনাশ, একজনের পৌষ মাস"। বর্ত্তমানে জনসাধারণের সর্ব্বনাশের সঙ্গে কয়েকজনের বিশেষ যে পৌষ মাস উপস্থিত হয়েছে ইহা জ্যামিতিক নিয়মে প্রমাণ করা যায়। Government খাদ্য দিতে অক্ষম; জনসাধারণ নিরুপায়ে অখাদ্য-কুখাদ্য খেয়ে উদর পূরণ করছেন। অধিকাংশই অনশন কিম্বা অর্দ্ধাশনে দিনপাত করছে। এই সকল কারণে দেশের সর্ব্বত্র Cholera, Typhoid, Beri-beri প্রভৃতি দুষ্ট ব্যাধি বিস্তৃতভাবে বৃদ্ধি পাইতেছে। Medical Department ঔষধ অভাবে চিকিৎসা করিতে পারিতেছে না; এবং জনস্বাস্থ্য বিভাগ স্বাস্থ্যরক্ষার কোনও বিধান, এমন কি মহামারি প্রতিষেধকের জন্য যাহা করণীয় তাহাও করিতে অক্ষম হইয়া পড়িয়াছে। জেলায় জেলায় যে Sanitary Inspectors ও District Health Officersগুলি আছেন তাঁহাদের চাকরী District Boardএর অধীনে হইলেও Governmentই তাঁহাদের বেতন দিয়া থাকেন। Health Officerএর অর্দ্ধেক বেতন Government দেন এবং Sanitary Inspectorদের সমস্ত বেতনই Government দিয়া থাকেন। কিন্তু অত্যন্ত দুঃখের বিষয় তাঁহাদের কার্য্যকলাপ দিন দিন এমন অবস্থায় পরিণত হইয়াছে যে তাহা আলোচনা করিতেও লজ্জা আসে। বাংলাদেশের এক কবি Bengal Policeএর পোষাকে ও টুপিতে যে B. P. লেখা আছে, তাহাকে V. P. বলিয়া বর্ণনা করিয়াছেন; অর্থাৎ তাঁহাদের পদার্পণ যেখানে হইবে সেইখানেই সদক্ষিণা তাহাদের বিদায় করিতেই হইবে। মফঃস্বলের Sanitary Inspectorsগুলি তাঁহাদের শীকার স্বরূপ ব্যবসায়ীদের মধ্যে অবস্থান করিয়া জঘন্য মনবৃত্তির পরিচয় দিতেছেন। কাজেকাজেই অবৈধ উৎসাহ বশতঃ ঘৃত, তৈল প্রভৃতি

[illegible] নিত্য ব্যবহার্য্য জিনিষগুলি অবাধে নানাভাবে ভেজাল হইয়া জনসাধারণের নিত্য-ভোজ্য হইয়াছে। তাহার সঙ্গে নানারূপ ব্যাধিও বৃদ্ধি পাইতেছে। জেলায় ব্যাপকভাবে যখন কোন ব্যাধি বিস্তৃতি লাভ করে, মুষ্টিমেয় Sanitary Inspectorগণও নির্ব্বিকারভাবে ঔদাসীন্য দেখাইয়া মাত্র কাগজে কলমে সম্বন্ধ বজায় রাখিয়াই ক্ষান্ত হন।

পল্লী অঞ্চলে বিশুদ্ধ জল সরবরাহের জন্য বৎসর বৎসর যে টাকা দেওয়া হয় তাহা অপ্রচুর ত বটেই এবং যথাযথভাবে ব্যয়িত হয় না। তাহার ফলে দুর্গন্ধ পঙ্কিল পুষ্করিণী অথবা ২।১টি পুরাতন কূপের অবিশুদ্ধ জল পল্লীবাসীর পানীয় হইয়া নানারূপ ব্যাধির বিস্তৃতিতে যৎপরোনাস্তি সাহায্য করিয়া থাকে।

নানা কারণে অন্যান্য ব্যাধির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আমাদের চির-পরিচিত Malariaও অদম্য উৎসাহে এবং নানা ছন্দে বাড়িয়া চলিয়াছে এবং সরকার বাহাদুরের হাঁসপাতালে ও dispensaryগুলিতে ইহার একমাত্র প্রতিষেধক এবং ঔষধ Quinine আংশিকভাবেও সরবরাহ করিতে পারিতেছেন না। জেলার Union Boards কিম্বা District Boards উভয় প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলি অক্ষমতা জানাইয়া দিয়া সাফাই গাহিতেছেন। এমন কি যে সমস্ত চিকিৎসক স্বাধীনভাবে গ্রামাঞ্চলে চিকিৎসা করেন তাহারাও Quinineএর অভাবে চিকিৎসা করিতে অক্ষম হইয়া পড়িয়াছেন। Quinine যেভাবে Government দেবার ব্যবস্থা করেছেন সে সম্বন্ধে পূর্ব্বে আমি বলিয়াছি। বাজারে যে Quinine বিক্রয় হয় তাহার মূল্য এত বেশী যে তাহা ভাবিলেও শঙ্কিত হইতে হয়। যে Quinine এক সময় ১২৲ টাকা ১৪৲ টাকা দরে বিক্রীত হইত এখন সেই Quinine ৩০০৲/৪০০৲ টাকা মূল্যেও কোন কোন সময় পাওয়া যায় না। এই অবস্থাতে সাধারণে যে Quinine বাজার হইতে ক্রয় করিয়া চিকিৎসা করাইবেন তাহারও কোন আশা নাই।

এ বৎসর Cholera চারিদিকে বিস্তৃত হইয়া বহু লোক ক্ষয় করিয়াছে ও করিতেছে। তাহার কারণ অখাদ্য, ভেজাল খাদ্য, কুখাদ্য, অনশন এবং অর্দ্ধাশন। ইহার প্রতিষেধকরূপে Cholera vaccine inoculation করা হয়। কিন্তু অত্যন্ত দুঃখের বিষয় আমাদের বীরভূম জেলায় বহুস্থানে Cholera হইলেও আমাদের Sanitary Inspectorরা অলসভাবে দিন কাটাইয়াছেন। বীরভূম Municipality এবং District Boardএর Chairmanদ্বয় উভয়েই অত্যন্ত দুঃখের সহিত আমার কাছে একথা স্বীকার করিয়াছেন।

সিউড়ী সহরে মাত্র কয়েক মাস পূর্ব্বে Beri-beriর প্রাদুর্ভাবে বহু লোক পীড়িত হয়েছেন। অনেকগুলি রোগী হঠাৎ প্রাণত্যাগও করেছেন। স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগের কর্ম্মচারিগণ কোনরূপ ব্যবস্থা করেন নাই। কিছুদিন হইতে বাজারে এবং এমন কি controlএর দোকান-গুলিতেও সরিষার তৈল নামীয় যে তৈল পাওয়া গিয়াছে, তাহা স্থানীয় Laboratoryতে পরীক্ষিত হইয়া অব্যবহার্য্য বলিয়া প্রমাণিত হইয়াছে। প্রায় প্রত্যেকটি নমুনায় Hydrocyanic acidএর অস্তিত্ব পাওয়া গিয়াছে। চিকিৎসকরা বলেন ইহাই বেরিবেরির একমাত্র কারণ। কিন্তু এজন্য কোন কঠোর ব্যবস্থা আজ পর্য্যন্ত করা হয়নি; তৈল বিক্রয়কারীদের কোন শাস্তি দেওয়া হয়নি। ইহা কি স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগের কর্ত্তব্যনিপুণতা ও কর্ম্মকুশলতার পরিচয়? কাঁকর মিশ্রিত চাউল, আমের কসি ও কাঠের গুঁড়া মিশ্রিত আটা ময়দা, পাকড়া বীজ মিশ্রিত তৈল, এবং নানারূপ অবর্ণনীয় দ্রব্য মিশ্রিত ঘৃত খাইয়া জনসাধারণ কেমন করিয়া সুস্থ থাকিতে পারে একথা কি আমাদের জিজ্ঞাসা করিবার অধিকার নাই? আমি ভাল করিয়াই জানি বক্তৃতা করিয়া কোন ফল হইবে না। গত ছয় বৎসর এই পরিষদ গৃহে বহু বক্তাই বক্তৃতা করিয়াছেন; Government কখনও, যতদিন তাহাদের সদস্য সংখ্যা বেশী থাকে, কোন বক্তব্যই গ্রহণ করেন

নাই এবং অত্যন্ত অবজ্ঞার সহিত প্রত্যাখ্যান করিয়াছেন। বর্ত্তমানে দেশের এই জীবন-মরণের সন্ধিক্ষণে এখনও কি Government জনসাধারণের প্রতিনিধিদিগের সহজ সত্য অভাব অভিযোগগুলি ঠিক তেমনিভাবেই তাচ্ছিল্য করিবেন?

Mr. SPEAKER; Your time is up.

Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJI: কোন দিক দিয়াই কি আমরা কোনওরূপে আমাদের এই ঘৃণিত জীবন যাপনোপযোগী সুখ সুবিধার দাবী করিতে পারি না? খাদ্যসঙ্কট আলোচনার দিন দেখিয়াছি সরকারী দলের অর্দ্ধেকের উপর সদস্যগণ পরিষদ গৃহের বাহিরে যাইয়া গল্পগুজবে ব্যস্ত ছিলেন, এবং কেহ কেহ দ্বিতল গৃহে সুকোমল কৌচে বসিয়া খাদ্য-সমস্যার মীমাংসা করিয়া নিজেদের তৃপ্ত করিতেছিলেন এবং মন্ত্রিগণের ঔদাসীন্যের প্রতীকরূপে গৃহ মধ্যে বসিয়া ছিলেন। ইহা দেখিয়া বহু পুরাতন প্রচলিত ইংরাজী কথাটি আমার মনে পড়িয়া গেল—"When Rome was burning Nevo was playing with his flute".

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about inadequate supply of quinine by the Government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, আজ বাংলা দেশে অনাহার এবং রোগের যে দৃশ্য আমরা চারিদিকে দেখছি, সেই দৃশ্যকে আরো বাড়াবার জন্য বা অবহেলার জন্য, এই Government ইচ্ছা করে কোন প্রতিকার করছেন না। কারণ, খাদ্য নেই কেন,—না food store করে জমা করে রাখবার জন্য। Quinine নেই কেবল আমাদের রোগীদিগকে বিনা চিকিৎসায় মৃত্যুমুখে পাঠাবার জন্য। তাই আমার নিবেদন যে বাংলায় যে পরিমাণ quinine আনাবার ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে তা যথেষ্ট নয় এবং তার আগে Government department বলে দিয়েছেন যে quinine দিয়ে প্রত্যেক malariaগ্রস্ত লোককে ভাল করতে হলে আশী গ্রেণ দরকার। আমরা '40 সালের Government report থেকে দেখতে পাই প্রত্যেক লোক কম পক্ষে ·6 থেকে ·4 grain পর্য্যন্ত quinine পায়, তার বেশী তারা পায়নি, যখন সাধারণভাবে supply ছিল। কিন্তু এখন মোটেই supply নাই। এই অবস্থায় quinine রোগীর কাছে যায় না এবং ডাক্তারেরা ঔষধ বিতরণ করতেও পান না। বর্ত্তমানে quinine কিভাবে ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে? জেলখানা থেকে, জেলখানার store থেকে quinine দেবে Civil Surgeonএর permit নিয়ে। Jailorএর কাছে permitএর জন্য দরখাস্ত করলে তারপরে ১০ জন, ১৫ জনের কাছে সই করাতে হয়। প্রত্যেক যায়গায় সই করাবার জন্য যে কি trouble পেতে হয়, কি পরিমাণ খরচ করতে হয় তা যাঁরা ভুক্তভোগী এই ভাবে quinine আনিয়েছেন তাঁরা সকলেই অবগত আছেন। যাই হোক্, সেই ব্যয় সাধ্য এবং কষ্টসাধ্য উপায়ে যথেষ্ট পরিমাণ quinine supply হচ্চে না। এমন কি District Board থেকেও বিনা ব্যয়ে quinine বিতরণের ব্যবস্থা ছিল, তা বর্ত্তমানে বন্ধ হয়ে গিয়েছে,—এক ছটাকও quinine পাওয়া যায় না। Malaria হয়েছে এমন বহু লোক বিনা চিকিৎসায় মারা যাচ্ছে। Quinine এর পরিবর্ত্তে যদি অন্য কোন ঔষধ Government থেকে এখানে প্রবর্ত্তন করা হোতো তাহলে লোকে বেঁচে থাকতে পারতো। তাই আমার বক্তব্য যে বর্ত্তমান Government যদি এই ভাবে মনে করেন যে আমরা চিকিৎসার ঔষধ দেবো না, আহারের কোন সংস্থান করবো না, দেশের লোক মরুক

আমরা তাদের জন্য দায়ী নই আমার মনে হয় যদি এই ভাবে Government quinine এবং অন্যান্য ঔষধপত্র দেশের মধ্যে সরবরাহ করবার ব্যবস্থা না করেন তাহলে দেশের বর্ত্তমানে যে অবস্থা, যে দৃশ্য আমরা দেখছি, আর বৎসর যে আমরা কি দেখবো সে বিষয় সকলেই উপলব্ধি করতে পারছি। সেজন্য আমার অনুরোধ বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী মহাশয় যেন অবিলম্বে যেখানে malaria বেশী সেই সকল যায়গাতে quinine সরবরাহ করবার জন্য সত্বর ব্যবস্থা করেন। আর quinine যেভাবে ডাক্তারদের জন্য ব্যবস্থা করা হচ্চে এবং সেই quinine-এর permit নেবার জন্য যে সকল আইন জারী আছে এবং অফিস থেকে quinine সংগ্রহ করবার জন্য যে বেআইনীভাবে তাদের অফিসে উৎকোচ দিতে হয়, সে সকল বন্ধ করবার জন্য মন্ত্রী মহাশয় জেলার অফিসারদিগকে সতর্ক করে দিন।

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir; I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100. I do so with a view to raising a discussion about the negligence of the Government to open maternity homes and to support the existing maternity homes and hospitals.

বাংলাদেশে প্রসূতি-মৃত্যুর হার এবং শিশু-মৃত্যুর হার যেভাবেই ক্রমান্বয়ে বেড়ে চলেছে, সেটা চিন্তার বিষয় হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। বর্ত্তমানে দুর্ভিক্ষে অসহায়ভাবে জাতি ধ্বংস পেতে বসেছে। তার সঙ্গে প্রসূতির মৃত্যুর হার এবং শিশু-মৃত্যুর হার যোগ দিলে ভবিষ্যতে এই জাতির কোন চিহ্ন আর থাকবে না। গভর্ণমেণ্টের নিকট আজ কয় বৎসর যাবৎ এই Maternity Home নিয়ে আবেদন নিবেদন করায়ও কোন ফল হয় নাই। বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের একটা Scheme আছে—যদি কেহ চার হাজার টাকা দিতে পারে তবে গভর্ণমেণ্ট চার হাজার দিয়ে Maternity Home করে দিবেন এবং সেখানকার লোকদের তার recurring expense ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে। আজ দরিদ্র দেশের লোক না খেয়ে মরছে, আজ ইংরাজ রাজত্বের পথ থেকে মফঃস্বলের যে ভীষণ অবস্থা তা সবাই জানেন এবং তখন বলা হচ্চে যে তোমরা চার হাজার টাকা দাও, তাহলে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আর চার হাজার দেবে এবং কি recurring expense হবে তারও হিসাব নেই—আর গভর্ণমেণ্টের Health Visitorএর মাইনে বছরে নয় শত টাকা মাত্র দিবেন। এই যে গভর্ণমেণ্টের প্রস্তাব, এর কোনই সার্থকতা নেই। কারণ দরিদ্র পল্লীবাসীর পক্ষে চার হাজার টাকা তুলে দেওয়া এবং তাদের পক্ষে এই recurring expenseএর ভার নেওয়া একেবারেই অসম্ভব। গেল বার একটা Schemeএর মত এসেছিল গভর্ণমেণ্টের সামনে যে প্রত্যেক Charitable Dispensaryতে গভর্ণমেণ্টের একটী করে শিক্ষিত পাশ করা Midwife দিন; সেই Midwife গ্রামস্থ দাইদের তাদের সঙ্গে রেখে তাহাদিগকে হাতেকলমে দাইএর কাজ শিখিয়ে দিন। এবং আমি ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করছি Dr. Mukherji ও Mrs. Mitraকে যারা নাকি গভর্ণমেণ্টের কাছে এটা strongly recommend করেছিলেন; তদানীন্তন মন্ত্রী মহোদয় এবং তার Secretary এটা recommend করে Financeএ পাঠিয়েছিলেন; কিন্তু Finance সেটাকে অগ্রাহ্য করল। আজ আমি বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের কাছে নিবেদন করি, তিনি এ দিকে একটু দৃষ্টিপাত করুন যাতে মাতৃজাতি বেঁচে থাকে এবং ভাবী বংশধররা বেঁচে থাকে; এবং যাতে করে অনেক বেশী Maternity Home খোলা হয় এবং ছোটখাট Maternity Home যেখানেই থাকুক না কেন, Municipal area বা Calcutta Corporation অথবা

মফঃস্বলে যেখানেই থাকুক না কেন, তাদের সাহায্যদান করুন এবং তাদের বাঁচিয়ে রাখার ব্যবস্থা করুন। আজ দেশে কি পরিস্থিতি উপস্থিত হয়েছে। কলিকাতা বা অন্যান্য সহর বুভুক্ষু নরনারীতে ভরে গেছে। তাদের মধ্যে আমরা দেখতে পাই, অনেক মেয়ে অন্তঃস্বত্বা—তাদের deliveryর ব্যবস্থা কোথায় হবে, গভর্ণমেণ্ট কি সে বিষয়ে চিন্তা করেছেন এবং তাদের জন্য বিশেষভাবে কোন Meternity Homeএর ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে? আজ তাই আমি পুনরায় নিবেদন করি এই Meternity Home এবং হাসপাতাল সম্বন্ধে মন্ত্রী মহোদয় অনুগ্রহ করে বিবেচনা করুন এবং নূতন scheme করুন যাতে পল্লীগ্রামের লোকদের আর চার হাজার টাকা না দিতে হয় অথচ তারা এই Meternity Homeএর সুবিধা পায়।

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to cite only a few instances this afternoon to show the utter callousness of the present Ministry towards the sufferings of the people. It is now a known fact that by the middle of June last cholera in an epidemic form broke out in the district of Rangpur. By the beginning of July I got a telephonic message from Saidpur to that effect and I saw the head of the Department of Public Health for the supply of adequate quantity of cholera vaccine for my district and I hurried to the affected area There I found to my utter surprise that in spite of long promises of the department not even a single drop of vaccine was to be found in the medical store of the district board. I made frantic efforts and wrote letters to the Chief Minister, to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Health and the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy. The date of that letter was 17th July last and I got a reply to that letter from the Hon'ble Sir Nazimuddin a month later stating that my letter had been forwarded to the department concerned for immediate action. As to my other two letters addressed to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Health and the Hon'ble Mr Suhrawardy they still remain to be answered. Again, by the end of that month the Chief Whip of the Government party went over to Rangpur, not so much to see the condition of the people there but to procure the signature of district board members to unseat the sitting Chairman of the district board. I appealed to him that he should come over to Calcutta at once and use his influence to send medical relief to Rangpur for whoever may be the Chairman of the district board, the main duty of the Chairman was to remove the sufferings of the people. The Chief Whip kindly made promises that within a week he would do something, but unfortunately the whole arrangement fell through and I had to come back to Calcutta and see the head of the Public Health Department again and heard that he had asked for an explanation for the absence of cholera vaccine in the medical store of the district board. I replied that mere asking for explanations would not do and that because no medicine was then to be found in the medical store of the district board people were dying like cats and dogs. Then again, to my utter surprise when I went back to Saidpur I saw the officer in charge of the Public Health Department sitting idle there for want of medicine while I found that a large quantity of cholera vaccine was to be sent to the Secretary of the local Muslim League. Though the latter gentleman was a medical man, he had no equipment with which to carry on inoculations: on the other hand the trained Public Health

Department men were sitting idle It was indeed a strange matter that medicine was sent to the Secretary of the Muslim League of Saidpur——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Was he a medical man?

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Though he was a medical practitioner he had no proper training and he had no equipment with which he could carry on inoculations.

I sent the Sanitary Inspector there and at his request that gentleman handed over part of the medicine to my department and I directed the department concerned to utilise the medicine for the suffering public. That was the state of affairs.

Sir, another startling thing that came to my notice was that in a particular union board presided over by a Muslim League President who happens also to be a Government officer, the President did not allow Hindu Sanitary Inspectors to enter Muslim villages. I got this information and with utmost effort I could procure only one Muslim Public Health Officer with whom I entered the village and found that five Muslim dead bodies were lying there and these poor people has died unattended and without being treated for this fell disease. I appealed to the sufferers themselves and they readily took medicine from Hindu doctors and I am glad to say that only one casualty took place and more than half a dozen people recovered from cholera. I appeal to the organisers of the Muslim League to take away this mentality from their followers so that at a time when people are dying they may place the consideration of saving the people over that of the party.

Sir, with these remarks I conclude my speech this afternoon.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the last speaker Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar, a Chairman of the District Board, has brought forward the allegation that there has been discriminatory treatment between Muslim Leaguers and non-Muslim Leaguers. I am not aware of it. I am anxious to see that this Department of Medical and Public Health affects not only the Muslim Leaguers but also the non-Muslim Leaguers, it affects the Hindus and Muslims alike. In this there should be no distinction. I do not know if this allegation is well-founded or not, but I have been just told that Mr Abu Hossain Sarkar has thanked the Chief Whip of the Government of Bengal for his efforts in giving all assistance that was possible under the circumstances when epidemic broke out in his district. He has sent his letter of thanks to the Chief Whip Mr. Fazlur Rahman who afterwards saw the area and made arrangements for sending vaccines to those places.

Sir, in the matter of public health, as my friend knows, we have made provision. We have got our public health schemes. There are schemes for rural water-supply, malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis, maternity and child welfare and hygiene. These are the seven heads under which expenditure is made. I am quite alive to the question of public health. It is not adequate even in Calcutta, not to speak of mufassal areas. It can be said that nothing has been done for the last 25 years towards the matter of *dai*-training in rural

areas. People are still left with the indigenous system of *dais* in the rural areas. But Government is alive to the question. It is trying its best and the scheme which has been mentioned by my friend on this side seems to be sound and that is working. This is a system of offering contribution of a moiety of the capital expenditure subject to a maximum of Rs. 3,000 for a clinic and Rs. 4,000 if a maternity ward is attached to the clinic and the pay of the Health Visitor at Rs. 75 to Rs. 125 per mensem. The balance of the capital and recurring expenditure is to be found from local sources. As many as 31 centres are working at present and certain other schemes are under the examination of the Lady Superintendent for Maternity and Child Welfare Work. Any project which may fulfil the terms is admitted into the scheme. The budget provision stands at Rs. 50,000 for the purpose. When 31 centres have been opened, it is expected that this scheme will work well. The condition attached to the scheme, viz., a contribution of Rs. 4,000, need not alarm my friends on the other side.

As regards quinine, I have already spoken about it in connection with "Medical" and I do not like to repeat it. We all know that Java is now an enemy-occupied country. At any rate, we have raised the normal annual grant of Rs. 5 lakhs to Rs. 5½ lakhs in this budget and we intend to raise it up to Rs. 9 lakhs. We are doing our utmost. We have arranged for cinchona cultivation being extended on an extensive scale. So, we are doing as best as we can.

In connection with his motion, Mr. Narendra Nath Das Gupta has said about dead bodies being eaten by jackals. No such complaint has yet reached me. If any such complaint comes, I will certainly look into the matter and see what steps can be taken. In the mufassal dead bodies are not taken proper care of by some charitable organisations. At any rate we want to extend medical help in rural areas. These are all the points which have been raised by my friends on the other side.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Did we hear the Hon'ble Minister to say that he has not come to know that dead bodies are being eaten by jackals? Who will apply to him—whether the dead body or the jackal? This has not come to his notice because no application has been received either from the dead body or from the jackal!

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Mr. Speaker, Dr. Sanyal in our legislature does not let grass to grow under his feet. He keeps every information where information is not possible to be obtained by ordinary people. I think it is not too much to expect from him that whenever any dead bodies are being uncared for in this way, he will just give information to this department.

The motion of Mr. Charu Chandra Roy that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Adwaita Kumar Maji that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Sharat Chandra Mukherji that the demand of s. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be duced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Sj. Narendra Nath Das Gupta that the demand of s. 39,23,000 for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be duced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Babu Ashutosh Mallick that the demand of Rs. 39,23,000 r expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" be reduced by Rs. 100 as then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad that sum of Rs. 39,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—ublic Health" was then put and agreed to.

7—Land Revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, on the recommendaon of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of s. 30,27,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "7—Land evenue".

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the emand of Rs. 30,27,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" e reduced by Rs. 100.

I move this in order to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) the inadequacy of the agricultural loan in areas where agricultural loans are urgently needed, and

(*ii*) the attempt of the Government to realise the agricultural loans in areas where famine conditions prevail.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Revenue ill say that a lump provision of 3 crores 80 lakhs has been provided for dvance to cultivators as against Rs. 93,47,673 spent in the year 1942-43, ut the situation, Sir, is critical. I live in a hotel where all the domestic ervants come from the district of Midnapore. I enquired of their conditions nd I am surprised to find that they all complained that their wives, their others, their children and their sisters are dying and are destined to die. Vhen I find the melancholy faces of my domestic servants, it really pains ne. In the district of Midnapore there have been two natural calamities. 'irst of all crops and everything were destroyed by the tidal bores last year, nd this year also everything has been destroyed in that particular area by lood. Now, the situation is this that if we are to save these cultivators, ubstantial sums must be advanced to them and not an inadequate amount s is generally done, namely, a sum of Rs. 5 or Rs. 10. This will not do. n making advances to the cultivators of this type it must be borne in mind pecially that the prices of seeds and cattle have increased 4 to 5 hundred imes. These prices have increased on account of the indiscriminate laughter of cattle and on account of their deaths due to diseases prevailing here. As the prices of both the seeds and cattle have increased 400 to 500

times, it is necessary that a substantial amount must be advanced to the cultivators. As a matter of fact, from this advance they will be in a position to grow crops. It should also be borne in mind that throughout the whole province of Bengal this advance shall have to be made this year. Therefore, I submit that though a larger amount has been provided for in the Budget in the shape of Rs. 3 crores and 80 lakhs for advance to the cultivators, still, having regard to the necessities of the time, this amount is also inadequate.

Then with respect to agricultural loans I beg to submit that no attempt should be made by the Government to realise the loans this year. The condition is peculiar, the circumstances are critical. Government hope that a sum of Rs. 1 crore and 20 lakhs, as it appears in the Budget itself, will be realised in the year 1943. I again submit that no attempt should be made to realise any loan this year. If any attempt is made to realise this loan, really it will cause extreme hardship on them, because already, as I have said, the conditions of the agriculturists are critical. Lastly, I beg to repeat that no attempt should be made by Government to realise the agricultural loans in this peculiarly critical year.

With these words, I beg to move my motion that stands in my name and I hope this will commend itself to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. ASIMUDDIN AHMED: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 30,27,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" be reduced by Rs. 100.

I move this in order to raise a discussion about—

(1) Abolition of Permanent Settlement in Bengal and grant the peasant proprietary system throughout the whole of the province, etc.

(2) Aggravated income-tax on agricultural income above a certain maximum, replacing the present rent and revenue.

(3) In lieu of monetary compensation as recommended by the Land Revenue Commission or even debentures may be guaranteed to the expropriated landlords in a nation building and national industrial planning schemes to be taken up by the Government immediately.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Permanent Settlement abolition সম্বন্ধে বহুকাল যাবত দেশে আন্দোলন চলে এসেছে। এবং গভর্ণমেণ্টও এই Permanent Settlement abolition সম্বন্ধে Land Revenue Commission বসান এবং সেই Commission এই Permanent Settlement উঠিয়ে দেবার জন্য recommend করে পাঠান। তারপর দুই বৎসর অতীত হয়ে গেল, আমাদের সদাশয় গভর্ণমেণ্ট এ বিষয়ে কিছু করলেন না। দেশে এই যে দুর্দ্দিন পড়েছে, এই যে অনাহারে, খাদ্যের অভাবে দেশের লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক মরছে—Permanent Settlement তার একটা বড় কারণ। Governmentএর এই জন্য ৭।৷০ কোটি টাকার অধিক ঘাটতি পড়েছে। বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্ট যদি এই Permanent Settlement উঠিয়ে দিত, তাহলে এই ঘাটতি অনেকটা লাঘব হত গভর্ণমেণ্টের পক্ষে। আমার এক বন্ধু বলছেন—গভর্ণমেণ্টের তাহলে আরও লাভ থাকত। কাজেই আমি বলতে চাই—আমার মনে হয়, জমিদাররাও অনেকে চায় এই Permanent Settlement উঠে যাক। আর দেশের যে অবস্থা,

এই অবস্থায় জমিদারদের revenue, তাদের খাজনা দিতে পারবে, একথা আমার বিশ্বাস হয় না। এবং কৃষক, তারা যখন খেতে পায় না আবার তারা খাজনা দেবে কোথা থেকে—যেভাবে বৃদ্ধি খাজনার। এবং এই Houseএ একটা Bill—কত resolution হল, কত কি হল; আমার বন্ধু আবু হোসেন সাহেব এই Bill নিয়ে কত চেষ্টা করলেন এবং তিনি কত আশা করে রয়েছেন, একটা কিছু হবে; কিন্তু কোন সময় কি হবে! কত গভর্ণমেণ্ট পরিবর্ত্তন হয়ে গেল কিন্তু এই Bill পড়ে রইল। কত Ministry, কত গভর্ণমেণ্টের পরিবর্ত্তন হইল কিন্তু rent reduction আর কখনও হল না। প্রজার অবস্থা পরিবর্ত্তন, কৃষকদের কোন স্বার্থরক্ষা ও তাদের দুর্দ্দশার পরিবর্ত্তন এ পর্য্যন্ত হয়নি। আর বন্ধু ধীরেন দত্ত মহাশয় বললেন—কৃষকদের বেশ খাবার আছে, তারা greedy, পেটুক; আর বন্ধুকে আমি বলতে চাই, তিনি চাষী ও কৃষকদের কথা মোটেই জানেন না। তিনি সাহেবে থাকেন—ছোটখাটো landlord। কাজেই তিনি বুঝতে পারছেন না, কৃষকদের ঘরে কত চাল আছে। তিনি যদি জানতেন, কৃষকদের ঘরে কি পরিমাণ চাল আছে বা ধান আছে, তবে একথা বলতেন না। মাননীয় সুরাবর্দ্দী সাহেব যে খানাতল্লাসী করেছেন, তার result যদি লক্ষ্য করা যায়—সেই গভর্ণমেণ্ট record এই দেখা যায় কারও ঘরে চাল ধান নেই। তাহলে তার বিশ্বাস করা উচিত ছিল যে কৃষকদের ঘরে কিছু নেই। থাকলে তারা এই যে ৪০।৫০৲ টাকায় চালের মণ বিক্রী করে পাচ্ছে—আমার বন্ধু বলছেন contractorদের কাছে ৭০৲ টাকায় চালের মণ বিক্রী করা হচ্ছে, ৭০৲ টাকা যদি চালের মণ বিক্রী করে পায়, তাহলে এমন কোন নির্ব্বোধ লোকা মানুষ আছে যে ঘরে এই চাল রাখবে। কৃষকদের ২।৪ আনা করে অনাহারে অধিকাংশ স্থানেই মরছে। আর ছোটখাটো কৃষক মরছে অনেক বেশী সংখ্যায়। তারপর কথা হচ্ছে—আমি বলতে চাই এই আজ যদি দেশের দুর্দ্দশা, দুর্গতি, অভাব, অনাহারগ্রস্ত লোককে বাঁচাতে হয়, তাহলে অচিরে গভর্ণমেণ্টের এই সব্ব শ্রেণী ও সর্ব্বদল-সমর্থিত Permanent Settlement উঠিয়ে দেবার প্রস্তাবটা কার্য্যকরী করা উচিত এবং সেটা অগৌণে করা উচিত। যখন সেটা গভর্ণমেণ্ট গ্রহণ করে নিয়েছেন, তখন এই দেরী করছেন কেন? এর ভিতর কি উদ্দেশ্য, কি দুরভিসন্ধি নিহিত আছে, আমি বুঝতে পারি না। জমিদারবাও বাধা দিচ্ছেন না—তাঁরা সকলেই স্বীকার করেছেন। তবে তাঁরা একটা compensation চান; যদিও আমরা এই রকম compensation দিতে চাই না। আমরা চাই, জমিদারদিগকে এই জমির জন্য monetary compensation না দিয়ে একটা national firm করে দেওয়া যার মধ্যে Directors or partners হিসাবে একটা ভাল রকম লাভ তারা পায়—একটা বড় অংশ পায়। তাহলে তারাও খেয়ে বাঁচবে, কৃষকরাও খেয়ে বাঁচতে পারবে। তাতে জমিদারদেরও উপকার হবে। কারণ টাকা পেলে তারা যেভাবে অমিতব্যয় করে, চিরকালের মত তাই করবে। কাজেই আমি বলতে চাই—খুব ভাল করে চিন্তা করে গভর্ণমেণ্ট আমাদের পরামর্শ গ্রহণ করুন—সকলে মিলে যেভাবে গ্রহণ করতে পারেন, এমন একটা scheme করে তার কাজ অচিরে করা দরকার। অচিরে খাজনা কমিয়ে দিয়ে speedy realisation যাতে হয়, গভর্ণমেণ্টের তার ব্যবস্থা করা উচিত। জমিদার গভর্ণমেণ্ট এখন তাঁরা সেটা বুঝতে পারবেন। Sir Nazimuddin একজন বড় জমিদার পূর্ব্ববঙ্গে—তিনি বুঝতে পারেন তাঁর যে estate তার কত খাজনা তিনি পান, আর কত revenue তিনি দিতে পারেন। Revenue Ministerও একজন বড় জমিদার; তিনিও বেশ বুঝতে পারছেন দেশের এই অবস্থায় তিনি

কত খাজনা দিতে পারবেন এবং ছোটখাট জমিদাররাও খাজনা দিতে পারবেন না। তাই আমার অনুরোধ দেশের দুর্দ্দশার দিকে লক্ষ্য করে ভারতবর্ষের জমিদারী প্রথা অচিরে উঠিয়ে দেওয়া উচিত।

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: I rise on a point of personal explanation in reference to the speech made by Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed.

Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed has said that I have stated that cultivators are greedy. I have never said that cultivators are greedy. On the contrary I have said that few rich cultivators whose number is very small have shown greed at the expense of the larger and poorer section of the people.

It has also been said that I am a landlord. Sir I am not a landlord, I am a labourer.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I beg to submit with reference to the motion of Mr. Datta that besides the large amount of agricultural loans granted to the Midnapore district last year, in the current financial year already Rs. 65,25,000 have been granted in the Midnapore district alone in the shape of agricultural loans. If further loans are necessary and if it is brought to the notice of Government that further agricultural loans are necessary they will see their way to granting the additional loans.

With reference to the motion of Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed may I speak in Bengali?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, if you like.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Mr. Asimuddin সাহেব যে ছাঁটাই প্রস্তাব এনেছেন, সে সম্বন্ধে আমি একটী কথা বলব, যদিও সময় অতি সংক্ষিপ্ত। ইতিপূর্ব্বে এই Houseএ গত ১৫ই মার্চ্চ তারিখ তৎকালীন রাজস্ব সচিব, আমার শ্রদ্ধেয় বন্ধু, প্রমথ নাথ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়, এ সম্বন্ধে বিস্তার আলোচনা করেছেন। তার পুনরুল্লেখ নিষ্প্রয়োজন। আমি তাঁকে শুধু একটী কথা স্মরণ করিয়ে দেব। দেশের বর্ত্তমান পরিস্থিতিতে এই জমিদারী প্রথার বিলোপ সাধন কতদূর সমীচীন, কতদূর সম্ভবপর এবং কতদূর কার্য্যকরী হতে পারে, সেটা তিনি বিশেষ করে বিবেচনা করে দেখবেন। ইতিপূর্ব্বে Land Revenue Commission একটা সিদ্ধান্তে উপস্থিত হয়েছে এবং গভর্ণমেণ্ট সে সম্বন্ধে বিশেষভাবে বিবেচনা করছেন। বর্ত্তমান ক্ষেত্রে এটাই বিবেচ্য যে বর্ত্তমান পরিস্থিতিতে সেটা কার্য্যকরী করা কতদূর সম্ভবপর এবং এই সঙ্গে সঙ্গে তাঁকে আর একটা কথা স্মরণ করিয়ে দেব যে এই জমিদারী প্রথার বিলোপসাধন মানে শুধু জমিদারকুলের বিলোপসাধন নয়, জমিদার ও কৃষকের মধ্যে মধ্যস্বত্বাধিকারী যা কিছু আছে, তা সকলের বিলোপসাধন। সেটা কতদূর উপস্থিত ক্ষেত্রে বাঞ্ছনীয় ও সম্ভবপর—যুদ্ধ-বিরতির আগে—, সেটা তিনি বিবেচনা করে দেখুন। যাহোক এ সম্বন্ধে গভর্ণমেণ্ট বিশেষভাবে বিবেচনা করছেন এবং যতশীঘ্র সম্ভব গভর্ণমেণ্ট এ সম্বন্ধে ব্যবস্থা করবেন।

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: On a point of information, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister is speaking; let him finish.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Agricultural Income-tax সম্বন্ধে তিনি নিশ্চয়ই অবগত আছেন, ইতিমধ্যে এই সম্বন্ধে একটা Bill এই Houseএ উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে

এবং সে সম্বন্ধে বিশেষভাবে আলোচনা ও বিবেচনা করবার জন্য একটা নির্দ্ধারিত কমিটী গঠিত হয়েছে এবং এই Bill সেখানে প্রেরিত হয়েছে এবং সেই কমিটীর recommendation সহ এই Bill এই Houseএ উপস্থাপিত হবে। আমি আশা করি, উভয় সদস্য তাঁদের প্রস্তাবগুলি উঠিয়ে নেবেন।

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: On a point of information, Sir. গত বাজেট sessionএ তৎকালীন Revenue Minister গভর্ণমেণ্টের policy state করেছিলেন যে জমিদারী প্রথা লোপ করে শীঘ্র গভর্ণমেণ্ট কাজ আরম্ভ করবেন এবং সেই কাজ ফরিদপুর জেলা থেকে আরম্ভ করবেন। কিন্তু বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী মহাশয় অন্যভাবে বলছেন। আমি কি এই কথা আপনার throughতে জিজ্ঞাসা করতে পারি যে গভর্ণমেণ্ট তাঁদের সেই policy change করেছেন কি না?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: আমি এ কথা বলিনি। আমি বলেছি যে ভূতপূর্ব্ব মন্ত্রী যেসব কথা বলেছেন তার পুনরুল্লেখ করা নিষ্প্রয়োজন কারণ তিনি সবিস্তারে এ সম্বন্ধে ইতিপূর্ব্বে বলেছেন।

Mr. ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: তা অক্ষরে অক্ষরে পালন হবে কি না।

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: আর কিছু আমার এ সম্বন্ধে বলবার নেই।

Mr. SPEAKER: You may simply say in reply that you are not going to make any statement.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I shall accept your suggestion. I am not going to make a statement at this stage.

The motion of Mr. Asimuddin Ahmed that the demand of Rs. 30,27,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 30,27,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukherjea that a sum of Rs. 30,27,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" was then put and areed to.

54—Famine.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 3,52,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "54—Famine".

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to declare famine in Bengal and organise relief in accordance with the provisions of the Famine Code.

Sir, in indifferent health and with sore leg it is not possible for me to speak at any length on any subject standing for a fairly long time; yet I would protest against the meagre allotment of time to this subject.

Sir, this subject is the all-important subject of the season and the most-important subject affecting this province, yet only three quarters of an hour have been allotted to this matter and for discussion of the motions that have been tabled on this subject. That shows that very little importance is attached by the Government to the discussion of the subject and one may presume that it is not the intention of the Government to have a fair discussion but to gag it.

Sir, in presenting the estimates or rather the Revised Estimates for 1943-44 the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has observed: "In Bengal today there is only one problem that matters—the food problem. Every one who has seen the plight to which Bengal finds herself today will agree that this is not the time for half-measures and no matter what the cost Government must afford relief to those unfortunates for whom failure to afford relief may mean death by starvation." Here there is, Sir, a clear suppression of truth. Failure to afford relief, Sir, does not mean the possibility of starvation now: actually widespread starvation has long begun on account of failure to provide relief. Already, Sir, deaths by hundreds and thousands have taken place for failure to administer relief in time. Now, Sir, what is the full measure provision that the Government has made for the administration of relief? The Finance Minister's statement says: "Last year's cyclone and this year's floods have a share in the responsibility for the present condition of the Province, but the main cause of today's widespread distress is the fantastically high price of rice. The estimated cost of relief operations now stands at 3 crores 52 lakhs of which a crore and 90 lakhs is on account of gratuitous relief and the balance for Test works."

Sir, the Government maintains that merely a provision of 3 crores will enable them to tide over the catastrophe that has overtaken the province. I do not think that the Government has a clear appreciation either of the catastrophe through which the province is passing or of its duties to face the situation that has developed; otherwise, Sir, it would not have rest contented with such meagre and paper provision for meeting the famine situation of a province of more than six crores of people. The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy in his speech the other day observed that 2,200 kitchens have been opened all over Bengal and from each kitchen about 500 people are getting their meals every day. What does it mean? It means that only 11 lakhs of people are going to get relief from the arrangements made by the Government. You will remember that in July session we moved a motion that famine should be immediately declared in the Province and Government should undertake the responsibility of organising widespread relief. Sir, that resolution of the Opposition was turned down, not only the resolution was turned down but no action was taken even after the Government was reminded of its duty. It was only on the 18th August last that the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy as

Minister of Civil Supplies got a memorandum to be circulated on the subject of relief of distress: yes, it is dated the 18th of August, 1943.

(At this stage the honourable member reached the time-limit.)

Sir, this is a very important subject and I may have another ten minutes.

Mr. SPEAKER: So much time?

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: I shall try to cut down my speech if you so desire.

Mr. SPEAKER: All right. In that case other members will only move their motions formally.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Thank you, Sir. It was so late as on the 18th of August that the Government moved in the matter of relief of distress and for the first time they in that circular directed that advantage should be taken of the Village Food Committees to prepare Relief Priority Lists and set up kitchens and distribute gruel through these kitchens to persons on the priority lists. It was for the first time that an instruction was given to open kitchens—priority kitchens—in the mufassal on the 18th August. On the 20th August, Sir, another circular was issued by the Relief Organisation Officer of the Government of Bengal to all the District Officers. In that circular you will find that no mention has been made either of relief kitchens or of poor houses or of orphanages—in other words of the institutions which have got to be started under the Famine Code. On the contrary you will find that enough cautions have been given not to administer relief on a large scale. I refer to page 2 of the Circular of the 30th August, there is this sentence: "In these circumstances it will be useless to put up fantastic schemes of relief grants in large quantities of foodgrains for sale at cheap rates. Relief and help must be restricted to the absolutely minimum number of persons and families and the estimates of requirements drawn up accordingly". Sir, the circular again ends with another caution: "Collectors and Subdivisional Officers should take personal interest in the matter of organisation of relief in all its aspects. Collector's personal responsibility for the proper administration of relief will remain. He must be fully posted about the developments and will have to look ahead so that the districts may not be caught unprepared." Sir, all the districts were caught within the meshes of famine long before that. Yet, at the same time there was the advice that "he must see that relief expenditure is to be kept to the essential minimum because in this year of widespread distress Government resources will be taxed to the utmost capacity to meet the needs of such minimum relief." And, Sir, in the face of these statements in the circular, dated the 28th August, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister comes forward to delude the representatives of the people in this House by saying that half-measures are not being adopted, and "no matter what the cost, Government must afford relief, for otherwise that may mean death by starvation." And

when was the Finance Minister deluding the people by suggesting that Government was bent upon adopting full measures? When, Sir, more than 1,000 deaths had taken place in Calcutta alone on account of starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: But they were people coming from outside.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: May be. I am coming to that point. Sir, in spite of our questions Government have not disclosed the figures of death. From newspaper reports however we see that in the last fortnight of August alone 219 people died of starvation in hospitals and 329 people died on the streets—altogether 548 in the last fortnight of August. And, Sir, in the first fortnight of Septpember what do we see? We see that the figures have gone up even in Calcutta notwithstanding all the parade that has been made in the matter of grant and distribution of relief. Deaths in hospitals have mounted up to 457 as against 219 in August and, Sir, from the 1st to the 15th of September street deaths have come up to 347 as against 329 in the last fortnight of August. Altogether there have been more than 800 deaths in the first fortnight of September when there were about 550 deaths in the last fortnight of August. That is the position, worsened and tragic position, in Calcutta where surely most of the steps for relief are being taken and from this you can understand how appalling must be the number of deaths in mufassal Bengal. This must be the case, Sir, when the Government did not take time by the forelock, when the Government did not organise in time and did not move on the lines laid down in the Famine Code

Sir, the history of British rule in India is marked, as Dutt and Digby say, by a series of widespread and devastating famines. Within five years of the Dewani the great famine of 1770 took place. When the first Lord Lytton was holding the Durbar of 1877 there was the great famine in Orissa and Southern India. After that the Famine Commission was set up and eventually the Famine Code came to be enacted. It must be said at least to the credit of the bureaucracy that they at least solved the question of famine relief on paper by drawing up the Famine Code. Had the provisions of the Famine Code been adopted in time so many deaths might have been prevented and prevented in time, but, Sir, all the provisions of the Famine Code were practically ignored. Government did not move on the lines laid down in that Code. The Famine Code—section 68—says "When test works begin to attract workers in considerable numbers or when gratuitous relief appears likely to be required on a considerable scale the District Officer shall report the fact, in continuation of the reports prescribed by sections 57 and 58, to the Commissioner and to the Local Government by a special telegram, with a view to famine being declared. As a rule the criterion as regards gratuitous relief may be held to have been attained when half per cent. of the population (according to the preceding census) of any thana or any larger area in the district has been on relief for two months continuously." Sir, on receipt of such a telegram it is for the Government and Government alone to decide whether famine

should be declared or not. Section 74 of the Famine Code provides, "On receipt of the telegram required by section 68 the Local Government shall decide whether in a district or part of a district famine should be declared. In the event of such a decision orders should be issued forthwith to the local officers concerned and the Government of India shall be informed".

Sir, had the Government, as I said before, taken precautionary measures in time a large number of deaths in fact most of the deaths now happening might have been prevented. In fact, it is due to the supineness of this Government, it is due to their failure to provide for adequate relief in proper time that such a large number of deaths have taken place and more people are on the verge of death and are going to die.

With these observations I move my motion and I hope, Sir, my motion will be carried.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this motion in order to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) Policy; and

(*ii*) Inadequacy of the grant.

Sir, my friend, Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri has already dealt with Famine and the Famine Code and it is high time that the Bengal Government should declare the province a famine area and necessary help should be given to it.

As regards the inadequacy of the grant, from the small red book it appears that in 1942-43 there has been an increment of Rs. 43·31 lakhs and the reason has been given by the Hon'ble Minister to this effect: "The increase was due to widespread distress caused by cyclone and flood in the districts of Midnapore and 24-Parganas." That is so far as last year is concerned. This year the Hon'ble Minister has also stated that the increase of 3 crores under Famine Relief is due to the serious deterioration of the economic situation over the greater part of the province owing to flood, cyclone and above all fantastically high price of rice. I must state that this amount of Rs. 3 crores is absolutely inadequate, because from the 1st of April to 24th of April this year when the constitution was suspended and the administration was taken by His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, in 24 days the expenditure for this purpose went to the extent of 36 lakhs. Now, Sir, at that time the price of rice was only Rs. 16 and at that time the expenditure was to the extent of 36 lakhs. While the price of rice has risen from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50, the increment has been very small in comparison with the expenditure of those 24 days.

One crore and 90 lakhs of rupees has been given for gratuitous relief and one crore and 60 lakhs of rupees for test relief works. So far as gratuitous relief is concerned I must say that a very small amount has been given to East Bengal. A large portion has been spent in Western Bengal and from the reasons given by the Hon'ble Minister it appears that it was spent and it will be spent for the areas which are affected by

flood and cyclone. So far as inadequacy of rice and want of rice are concerned the Hon'ble Minister is absolutely silent. He has stated that this amount has been given because there has been high price of rice. He is not prepared to say there is inadequacy of rice; he is not prepared to say there is want of rice. The same tone, the same theory prevail in the statement of the Hon'ble Minister, because they are still under the impression that there is rice in Bengal and that the price has risen high because of hoarding. I say it has been proved and proved by themselves that there is no rice in Bengal as Bengal has been declared a deficit area. The grant is inadequate and I say more money should come under this head.

Sir, you know Chandpur is a subdivision which stands on the river Meghna and in that area jute is grown. Paddy is scarcely grown there and as a result the people of that area are suffering for want of rice and the price has risen high. Their miseries know no bounds. I stressed the matter to the then District Magistrate Mr. Stracey who said that help should come from the rich villagers and Union Board Presidents should help the people by raising money from the public. Now, Sir, it is a pity that most of the Union Board Presidents are Muslim Leaguers. They do not represent the grievances of the people to the authorities lest the Government should ask for explanations and lest they may not get the favours they are usually getting at the hands of the present Ministry. Then, Sir, the District Magistrate stated that relief would be given when the time came. But when will that time come? The time will be, he said, in the months of *Aswin*, *Kartic*, *Agrahayan* when the distress will increase. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy stated that he sent 50,000 maunds of rice to Chandpur. I must say, Sir, that this quantity is very small in comparison with the magnitude of distress prevailing in that locality. Sir, while I was coming to Chandpur about a month ago, while I was going from the Railway Station to the Dak Bungalow I saw as many as three deaths on the way. The leg of one of the deceased had been eaten up by a dog. Moreover, Sir, there have been some kitchens at Chandpur that are run on public charity. The other day, about 5 or 6 days ago, while I was talking with the Subdivisional Supply Officer one man from Hajiganj came and demanded rice to arrange for free kitchen on public charity, and do you know, Sir, what was the reply given by the Subdivisional Supply Officer? He said: "I can't give rice at controlled rate. You must seek for rice in the locality". But there was no rice available. So you see, Sir, the magnitude of the scarcity in that part of the area. I appeal to Government to be kind enough to go to the locality, I mean Chandpur, and see the distress of the people with their own eyes. Instead of flying to Lahore and Delhi if Hon'ble Ministers will go there, it will be doing a greater service in the matter of relief as they will see the distress prevailing there with their own eyes.

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the famine and distress relief in some parts of the province.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, বর্ত্তমানে দুর্ভিক্ষের করাল ছায়া আমরা এই কলিকাতার মত মহান নগরীতেও দেখছি যে কি ভীষণ আকার ধারণ করেছে। প্রতিদিন কত লোক রাস্তাঘাটে মরে পড়ে রয়েছে এবং শত শত কঙ্কালবিশিষ্ট লোকের মূর্ত্তি আমরা রাস্তাঘাটে দেখতে পাচ্ছি। কিন্তু মন্ত্রী মহাশয়েরা কি মফঃস্বলে বা পল্লী অঞ্চলে লোকেরা কি অবস্থায় আছে, কি পরিমাণ লোক যে অনাহারে মারা যাচ্ছে, সে বিষয় খবর রাখেন? এই দুর্ভিক্ষের কারণ সম্বন্ধে অনেকে বলেছেন যে বিদেশ থেকে শস্য এখানে না আসাই একটা কারণ এবং বহু লোক এই যুদ্ধের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় খাদ্য খেয়ে ফেলছে। আমরা জানি বহু শস্য Government কিনে নিয়েছেন; তাতে সরকারী লোকদের খাওয়া দাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করবেন। কিন্তু বেসরকারী লোকের খাওয়া দাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করবার জন্য কি হবে? তাহাদিগকে বাঁচাবার জন্য কি উপায়? যাঁরা বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীতে রয়েছেন তাঁরা anti-hoarding driveএর সঙ্গে কেন দক্ষিণ আফ্রিকায় ধান রপ্তানি করবার জন্য মত দিলেন? দ্বিতীয়তঃ আমরা দেখতে পাচ্ছি যে anti-hoarding drive বা food census এতে যে ৩১ লক্ষ টাকা বা তার অর্দ্ধেক ১৫।০ লক্ষ টাকা খরচ হয়েছে, তা মাত্র কাগজে কলমে রয়ে গিয়েছে: কারণ গত food censusএর সময় যে সকল food committee হয়েছিল কোন যায়গায় food committeeতে তাদের union বা তাদের গ্রামে কি পরিমাণ লোক খেতে পাচ্ছে বা না পাচ্ছে বা কয়জন মরছে তার সংবাদ সরকারে আসেনি এবং সেই সকল committeeকে কার্য্যকরী করবার জন্য Writers' Buildings থেকে কোন নির্দ্দেশ যায়নি এবং জেলার Magistrate বা কর্তৃপক্ষ সে বিষয়ে বিশেষ নজর দেননি। তা ছাড়া আমার মনে হয় Government লোককে দেখিয়ে ফাঁকি দেবার জন্য একটা eye-washএর মত এই প্রস্তাবটি করেছিলেন। কারণ বর্ত্তমানে আমরা দেখতে পাই এই যে দুর্ভিক্ষ, এ দুর্ভিক্ষ খাদ্যের অভাবের জন্য নয়, এটা Governmentএর দোষের জন্যই উপস্থিত হয়েছে। আমি বর্দ্ধমান জেলার কথা বলবো: সেখানে anti-hoarding driveএর পর যে পরিমাণ শস্য Government থেকে store করা আছে সে সকল শস্য যদি release করা হয় তা হলে আমার মনে হয় এই দুই মাসের জন্য খানিকটা লোক খেয়ে বাঁচতে পারে। কিছুদিন আগে ২৪শে August তারিখে Governmentএর relief organisationএর officer এবং Assistant Secretary একটি ফতোয়া জারি করেছেন এবং জেলার Magistrate এবং অন্যান্য officerদের দিয়েছেন। তার মধ্যে এটা উল্লেখ করেছেন—utilisation of local resources; কিন্তু এ কথা বলেছেন না যে stock যা আছে সেগুলি distress relief workএর জন্য খরচ করা হবে। আমি উদাহরণ দিয়ে বলছি যে কাটোয়া মহকুমায় চৈতন্যপুরের চৌধুরীদের এবং রাজায়ের মল্লিকদের বহু হাজার মণ ধান requisition করা আছে। আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই যে এই সকল ধান কেন emergencyর জন্য রাখা হয়েছে? যখন লোক দুর্ভিক্ষে মারা যাচ্ছে এক বেলাও না খেয়ে। বর্দ্ধমান flood এবং famine দুটো জিনিষেরই সম্মুখীন হয়েছে। বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী মহাশয়েরা এই যে Secretary'র কাছে একটা পত্রিকা পাঠিয়ে দিলেন এবং সেই পত্রিকা অনুযায়ী যে organisation সেখানে স্থাপন করছেন, সেই organisation সেখানকার Magistrate, Subdivisional Officer কার্য্যকরী করেছেন কি না সে বিষয়ে খবর রাখেন কি? আমার মনে হয় এদের পরে হয়ত সামান্য পরিমাণে কৃপা এসেছে; সেই requisition ধান বা ধর্ম্মগোলার ধান নেবার প্রয়োজন হবে না। কাজেই এই যে গোলাভরা ধান থাকতেও লোক না খেয়ে মরছে এবং Governmentএর storeএ যে যথেষ্ট পরিমাণ শস্য রয়েছে,

সেই সকল ধান এবং চাল পচে পোকা হয়ে যাচ্ছে। সেগুলি famine বা flood reliefএর জন্য কোন কোন জায়গায় হয়ত কিছু পরিমাণে দান করেছেন। কিন্তু অন্যান্য জায়গায় আমি জানি মহকুমা সদরে যতগুলি requisition ধান আছে তাদের মধ্যে অনেকগুলি হয়ত floodএ নষ্ট হয়ে গিয়েছে। কিন্তু বর্ত্তমানে যদি অবিলম্বে সেই সকল ধান release করে loan হিসাবে কিম্বা kitchenএ ব্যবহৃত হয়, কিম্বা cheap grain shop করে দেবার ব্যবস্থা করা হয় তাহলে দুই মাস কি তিন মাস তারা বাঁচতে পারে। গত কাল সংবাদ পেয়েছি যে মেমারিতে ৩।৪টে লোক অনাহারে মারা গিয়েছে। এ ছাড়া বিভিন্ন জেলাতে যে হারে লোক মারা যাচ্ছে তার খবর রাখি, নয় হিসাব পরে দিব। আমাদের Executive Officerদের এবং Ministerদের এতদিন পর্য্যবেক্ষণের অভাবেই এই অবস্থা দাঁড়িয়েছে।

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about utter and lamentable failure on the part of the Government to cope with the famine and its attendant evils which are exacting heavy toll from among the starving people and which have created a most critical situation in the district of Bankura where 4 to 5 lakhs of people are affected; and the pressing need of expanding and intensifying the relief operation in the distressed tracts on the following lines:—

(*i*) establishment of free kitchens on a large scale;

(*ii*) opening of a larger number of test works for labourers who are starving for want of employment and payment of wages in grains;

(*iii*) establishment of cheap grain supply centres in every part where rice is scarce or not available within the means of people of ordinary circumstances;

(*iv*) distribution of gratuitous doles of rice among the destitute middle class families which cannot avail of public kitchens;

(*v*) distribution of barley and milk among the emaciated infants; and

(*vi*) medical aid for the indigent sick.

আমার এই প্রস্তাবটি যদিও একটি বিশেষ জেলা নিয়ে করা হয়েছে, কিন্তু এখানে খাদ্য-সঙ্কট সম্বন্ধে যে সমস্ত বিবরণ শুনছি অন্যান্য বক্তৃতাতে, আমার এতে যা অভিযোগ আছে আমার মনে হয় অন্যান্য জেলাতেও যেখানে এই দুর্ভিক্ষের ছায়া দেখা গিয়েছে সেখানেও এই অভিযোগ সমানভাবে প্রযোজ্য। আমার জেলা অর্থাৎ বাঁকুড়া জেলা বিশেষভাবে দুর্ভিক্ষের কবলে পড়েছে। এটা গত পৌষ মাস থেকেই জানা গিয়েছিল। এখানে একটু বাঁকুড়ার ইতিহাস আপনাদের কাছে বলা দরকার। আপনারা জানেন যে বাঁকুড়া জেলা সবচেয়ে দরিদ্র জেলা। এই বাঁকুড়াতে গত ৩০ বৎসরের মধ্যে সাতটা দুর্ভিক্ষ হয়ে গিয়েছে। একে, অবশ্য এই দুর্ভিক্ষকে distress বলেন, famine স্পষ্ট বলেন না—distress, scarcity তা distress বা famine সাতটা এই গত ৩০ বৎসরের মধ্যে বাঁকুড়া জেলায় হয়ে গিয়েছে। ফলে হয়েছে কি? বাঁকুড়াতে যে সমস্ত কৃষক এবং সাধারণ শ্রেণীর লোক আছে

তাদের এ রকম একটা অনুকষ্ট হলে তা সহ্য করবার শক্তি থাকে না, তাদের সহন ক্ষমতা কমে গিয়েছে। সেজন্য বাঁকুড়া খুব দরিদ্র এবং বাঁকুড়াতে অনেকে জানেন যে বাঁকুড়ার শ্রমিকরা সেখানে কাজ না পেয়ে, ২৪-পরগণা, হুগলী, হাওড়া প্রভৃতি এই সমস্ত অঞ্চলে এসে খেটে উপার্জন করে নিয়ে যায়। বাঁকুড়া হ'লো এক ফসলের যায়গা, সেখানে ২।৩টা ফসল হয় না; শুধু এই আমন ধান হয়। আউশ ধান বাঁকুড়ার সদর subdivisionএ খুব সামান্য হয়, সেটা ধর্ত্তব্যের মধ্যেই নয়। এই বাঁকুড়ার সদর subdivisionএ হোলো আট লক্ষ লোকের বাস। এ যায়গাতে সব সময়ই অনুকষ্ট উপস্থিত হয় এবং এই দুই-তৃতীয়াংশ অঞ্চল, বাঁকুড়ার সদর subdivision এটা কাঁকর মাটি, অনুর্ব্বর যায়গা, এখানে ভাল ফসল হয় না, পোকা ইত্যাদির দরুণ সেখানে ১৪ আনা কি ১৫ আনা ফসল নষ্ট হয়ে যায়, ১ আনা কি ২ আনা ফসল কৃষকেরা পায়। এই ২ আনা ফসলে কয়দিন চলে? ২ আনা ফসলে ফাল্গুন মাস যেতে না যেতেই তাদের কষ্ট দেখা দেয়। এ বিষয়টা কর্ত্তৃপক্ষের নজরে আনা হয়, কিন্তু এমনই বাঁকুড়ার দুর্ভাগ্য যে সেখানে যত অপগণ্ড I. C. S. Magistrate পাঠানো হয় তাঁরা ভাল ছেলে competitive examination পাশ করে যান, কিন্তু একবার District Administration Reportটা খুলে দেখবার অবসর তাদের হয় না। যদি দেখেন ত বাঁকুড়ার অবস্থাটা কি তা তাঁরা বুঝতে পারেন। যখন দেখলেন যে এক বছর ফলন হয়নি, তখনই তাঁদের বোঝা উচিত ছিল যে এই বাঁকুড়াতে distress বা দুর্ভিক্ষ উপস্থিত হবে। কারণ বাঁকুড়ার ইতিহাসে দেখা যায় সেটা; সেখানে বেশী অভিজ্ঞতার দরকার করে না; Administration Report দেখলেই সেটা জানতে পারা যায়। কিন্তু সেখানে তাঁরা তা করলেন না। সেই অবস্থায় তাঁরা করলেন কি, না বাঁকুড়াকে বাড়তি ধানের দেশ বলে সেখান থেকে চাল রপ্তানি করে দেওয়া হলো, বাইরে দিয়ে দেওয়া হোলো। যা কিছু চাল পূর্ব্ব ২ বছর লোকের সঞ্চিত ছিল সে চালটুকু পর্য্যন্ত তাদের চলে গেল। এ সম্বন্ধে Test Relief Works খোলবার জন্য Magistrateকে বলা হয়—তা করা হ'লো। June মাসের পর test কাজ আরম্ভ করা হোলো। এত দিন শ্রমিকেরা না খেয়ে একেবারে শুকিয়ে যেতে লাগলো, সপরিবারে শুকোলো। June মাসে খোলা হোলো test work; কিন্তু তারপরে test workএর এমন ব্যবস্থা হ'লো যা নিতান্ত নৃশংস, নিতান্ত অমানুষিক এবং অবৈধ। Test workএ শ্রমিকরা গেল কিন্তু শ্রমিকদের তাড়িয়ে দেওয়া হোলো। বলা হোলো যে ২০০র বেশী শ্রমিক নেওয়া হবে না। এ নিয়ম ত কখনও কোন কালে ছিল না! এই হালে এই মন্ত্রীদের আমলে এই নূতন নিয়ম হয়েছে কি না আমি বলতে পারি না; কিন্তু সেখানে এই ঘটনা ঘটেছে যে শ্রমিকদের ফিরিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। ব্যাপকভাবে আরো test work বাড়াবার জন্য বলা হয়েছে তা করা হয়নি। বিশে August তারিখে রাজস্ব-সচিব তিনি যে District Officerদের circular letter পাঠিয়েছেন, সেই circular letterএ বলা হয়েছে যে যেখানে দুর্ভিক্ষ খুব বেশী সেখানে priority list তৈরি করবার জন্য—(At this stage the member reached the time-limit.) আমি আর ২।১ minute বলবো, কারণ এটা একটা খুব important জিনিষ, সেখানে ৪।৫ লক্ষ লোক বিপন্ন; যদি এখানে আপনারা ব্যবস্থা না করেন তাহলে এক লক্ষ লোক মারা যাবে। ব্যাপার হচ্চে, আপনারা priority list না করে যেখানে দেখবেন প্রয়োজন বেশী, সেখানে local resources যা তাই নিয়ে কাজ আরম্ভ করবেন। কিন্তু এ হয়েছে Juneএ। ২০শে September হ'লো এখনও পর্য্যন্ত অনুসত্র খোলা হয়নি। এর কারণ কি জানি না। অনুসত্র যেখানে যেখানে খোলবার দরকার সেখানে খোলা হয়নি। তাহলে বলতে হবে, আপনাদের

instruction কাগজে এক রকম থাকে এবং District Officerদের Writers' Buildingএ ডেকে রাজস্ব-সচিব অন্য কথা কিছু বলে দেন, যার দ্বারা তাঁর এই লিখিত instruction তাঁরা মানেন না। এ ভিন্ন আর অন্য কিছু ব্যাপার হতে পারে না। আমি অর্থ-সচিবের দৃষ্টিও আকর্ষণ করছি। তাঁরা আমার জেলার vote নিয়ে এখানে এসেছেন, কিন্তু তাঁরা যদি প্রকৃত বিহিত ব্যবস্থা না করেন তাহলে সেখানকার যাঁরা নির্বাচকমণ্ডলী তাঁরা বুঝবেন এবং ভবিষ্যতে তার ব্যবস্থাও করবেন।

Mr. SYED BADRUDDUJA: Sir, I am simply moving the motion that stands in my name. There is no time for me to make any speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: Have you moved your motion?

Mr. SYED BADRUDDUJA: Sir, I formally move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about the inadequacy of measure to deal with famine condition in the acute distress of the province.

Khan Bahadur A. M. L. RAHMAN: Sir, I rise to move the cut motion that stands in my name viz., that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about the inadequacy of relief in distress areas.

Sir, in spite of all the solemn assurances of Government that relief is being given, the fact remains that people are dying in thousands all over Bengal. I have the other day cited the instance of Nilphamari in this House. We are therefore entitled to ask, Sir, is the relief adequate and is it really being rushed to those scenes of distress and destitution? I have, as I said before, seen with my own eyes and here I have in my hand a telegram from the President of a very important relief organisation that there is total scarcity of rice in the subdivisional town of Nilphamari since the 11th of this month. Public organisations composed of men of unimpeachable honesty stand helpless and aghast before a bewailing suffering humanity. In spite of their best intentions, in spite of money at their disposal, they cannot obtain foodgrains to save the dying and the destitute. Endless conferences, deputations and meetings have not succeeded in expediting despatch. The Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies has frankly admitted that "there are areas which are in grave distress but the extent of despatch is limited partly by supplies and partly by the inadequacy of wagons within the Province." If such be the case and if Government are unable to speed up supplies even at this critical stage, then the honourable members of this House, one and all, must be prepared to steel their hearts for the next two months. We are all agreed, Sir, that the situation is desperate and requires a drastic remedy. We have heard so much about the thousands of tons food coming into Bengal, we read every day of the magnificent efforts of the sister provinces to send succour to this unfortunate land of ours but where are they and why are they not being rushed? Sir, if there is a railway accident, a relief train is

rushed at a moment's notice and is it not a cruel irony of fate that a few wagons are not available now to send relief to places where people have died and are still dying in hundreds, if not in thousands.

As it is, the quantity of food supplied in the gruel kitchens is not sustenance enough for a person to resist the onslaught of disease. Two chattacks of rice given as gruel and distributed once a day is a god-send no doubt to the hungry and the starving, but I ask, Sir, is it enough for the maintenance of life? Is it not a fact, Sir, that deficiency diseases are rampant throughout? Is it not true that epidemics are taking a heavy toll? And is it too hard to conceive that as conditions grow worse, Bengal, the granary of the East, will be converted into a howling wilderness? Emaciation that has started within the frail human skeletons will run its unfettered course and the lamp of life now flickering in them is perhaps the last signal that the race they belong to is on the verge of extinction.

Sir, Government have purchased stocks of rice in surplus districts and in certain districts some areas also have been earmarked as surplus areas. Wheat also has come into Bengal in large quantities. So what is there to prevent Government from sending foodgrains by road either in carts or in lorries and in river districts by boats, if necessary? Each one of us has witnessed the appalling miseries of the poor, the horrors of death and starvation, each one of us has stood up in this House to demand that something must be done at once, the humane elements in our nature have been stirred to their uttermost depths, but what is the sum total of our achievements? The nett result is that even gruel kitchens have not yet covered the entire field of distress in the districts and though the intentions of relief are there the foodgrains are missing.

To my mind, Sir, Government ought to mobilise all their officers to come forward and help in relief operations, to see that distribution is quick and equitable and that there is no corruption of any kind anywhere in the discharge of this sacred trust and responsibility. Food must be obtained at all costs, food must be provided to the *bona fide* relief organisations, at controlled price and in these hard times of adversity united Bengal must stand up and declare that food is not politics but life itself.

Mr. J. W. R. STEVEN: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the necessity for proper central co-ordination and direction of relief measures.

My first point relates to the Central Relief Fund, the opening of which was announced by the Hon'ble Minister on 21st August. An appeal was issued by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister on 5th September for contributions to this fund, but we are still in the dark as to how it is to be administered. We had understood that a representative committee was to be set up with the Hon'ble the Chief Minister as Chairman to supervise the collection and allocation of funds, and some time ago we sent into Government names of European representatives who were prepared to serve on this committee.

We would like to know why this committee has not been formed and what are the intentions of Government with regard to the administration of this fund, and in particular with regard to the allocation of contributions to it. We would emphasise that this is an important matter. In fact substantial contributions to the Central Relief Fund are being held up owing to uncertainty with regard to its administration. We would urge that Government should make an immediate declaration of their intentions with regard to this fund.

Sir, my second point is that there must be central direction of relief measures and there must be a uniform policy. There have been magnificent non-official and official efforts to relieve distress in this Province, but they have been often haphazard and piecemeal in character and unrelated to each other. Government have recently appointed a Joint Secretary to the Revenue Department to be in charge of relief measures. I would suggest that he should be a Director of relief measures, an executive touring officer, not a Secretariat official who will sit in Writers' Buildings. He should, moreover, have a touring staff of supervisors, who will co-ordinate and supervise relief efforts throughout the Province.

I would suggest also that there must be a uniform policy as regards the form of relief measures. What is often happening now is that in one area grain doles are being handed out and in an adjoining area there are gruel kitchens. The result is the kitchens are not a success as the villagers, not unnaturally, prefer the doles. There is no doubt, however, that with the scarcity of supplies the method of gruel kitchens must be generally adopted and it is, therefore, important that there should be a uniform policy of opening gruel kitchens in preference to giving grain or cash doles.

My third point is the need for clear and definite instructions to local officers. In our opinion the printed instructions dated 20th August issued to all District Officers by the Revenue Department are an example of what instructions should not be. We are dealing with conditions of acute food shortage and instructions should be designed to meet these emergency conditions. What are we to think of instructions which ask union relief committees as their first and most important duty to prepare lists of persons graded according to their degree of distress? What are we to think of instructions which provide for the following elaborate and protracted procedure:—Each union relief committee is to prepare an estimate of requirements according to Form B. These estimates are to be scrutinised and revised by the Assistant Relief Officer. The Assistant Relief Officer is to consolidate the estimates of the committees in his block and submit them to the Circle Relief Officer. The Circle Relief Officer is again to revise the estimates and submit a consolidated estimate of the requirements of his circle to the Subdivisional Officer. The Subdivisional Officer is similarly to send a consolidated statement of the requirements of all Relief Circles in his subdivision to the Collector "in quadruplicate". What will happen to the poor unfortunate villagers while this protracted procedure is going on is not stated in the instructions! In our opinion, Sir, it is the job of the local officers to know the needs of their areas and

this complicated procedure is unnecessary. In our opinion the instructions should have been (*i*) It is the job of all local officers to prevent starvation; (*ii*) All local officers shall be relief officers and for that purpose shall have necessary powers in their respective jurisdictions; (*iii*) It is the job of the local officers to know the position in their respective areas, to estimate requirements over and above local resources, and to apply for assistance if local resources are not sufficient to prevent starvation. Union relief committees should certainly be formed and should be used for assisting in collecting local resources, for providing volunteers for running gruel kitchens, etc., and for exposing hoarders and price control offenders.

What we do regard as serious is, first, the time which must have been wasted in preparing these instructions and, second, that the capacity for action of the local officers is going to be tied up with such a complicated and unworkable machinery.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to the honourable members who have very kindly extended very useful suggestions. Let me assure you, Sir, and through you the honourable members, that these suggestions will receive the most earnest and immediate consideration of Government.

I would like to say a few words with regard to the speech of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri. Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri is a veteran parliamentarian and he has tried to place before the House only one side of the implications for the declaration of a famine. In this connection I would like to point out that according to the Famine Code and the Famine Manual which describe how relief works are to be administered, Government have so far done everything which could have been done. Government have arranged for the sale of foodgrains at subsidised rates to the people, but the Famine Code, according to rule 87, provides that such relief should be given from charitable funds only. Then again, the Government is distributing cloths, blankets, etc., to the destitutes in some of the worst affected areas, but the Famine Code prescribes that this should also be done from charitable funds——

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: What has Famine Code to do with charitable funds?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am placing before the House the implications in declaring the famine.

Then it prescribes that the supply of diet to patients has also got to be met from public funds, but Government have also made arrangements for that. In some of the worst affected areas Government have made arrangements for the purchase of cattle, etc., from the provincial revenues although the Famine Code contemplates that this should be done from charitable funds.

Now, Sir, coming to the motion of Mr. Adwaita Kumar Maji, I may tell him that the stock of rice and other foodgrains which he has said to be lying unused that a good portion of it has already been used for giving relief to the famine-stricken people of that district.

As regards the motion of Mr. Manindra Bhusan Sinha, I may tell him that in Bankura district Government has up to date paid Rs. 2,10,000 for Gratuitous Relief and Rs. 2,40,000 for Test Relief works besides a sum of Rs. 6 lakhs for agricultural loan. (Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: What is the amount needed there?) Sir, I may assure the House that Government is ready to pay as much as is really necessary for rendering relief to the people and this is the requisition which has up to date been received either from the District Board or from the local officials. If Mr. Sinha kindly come and meet me and discuss with me these matters I am sure Government will see its way to grant further relief to this district which I know is suffering very badly.

Sir, in a work of such huge magnitude and affecting practically the whole of this province there may be defects or mistakes in one place or other and if these things are brought to the notice of the Government I am sure Government will do its best not only to remedy them but also to do its best to extend further relief to these people.

Now, Sir, in this connection I would also inform the House that besides this sum of Rs. 1,74,18,000 already granted during the current year in the shape of agricultural loans, Government has up to date paid Rs. 1,43,40,000 in the shape of Gratuitous Relief and Rs. 1,08,62,000 for Test Relief works. Besides this about Rs. 3 crores have already been spent by the Civil Supplies Department in rendering relief in the shape of foodgrains and in addition to that the Agriculture Department has also arranged to spend more than one crore of rupees in the shape of seed loans and other loans for agricultural operations. Besides these, as has already been announced on the floor of the House by the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies, more than 2,200 free kitchens have already been started in different parts of the province and I may assure the House that within the course of this week at least 1,000 more free kitchens will be started——

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: We have received information from our constituencies that rice is not available anywhere and people are dying——

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Datta, will you please resume your seat?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I may tell you that arrangements are also being made to start at least one free kitchen in every union all over the province, wherever necessary.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: We won't hear you. We have been receiving most harrowing tales and rice is not available anywhere.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Datta, it appears that you are persistent in not listening to the Chair. This is not proper. Yes, Mr. Mukerjea.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: People may make mistake between relief and food supplies. Of course these two works are closely allied. There is no doubt about that. But at the present moment we are concerned with discussing more about relief works than the supply of food. Food supply is a matter which is the primary concern of the

Supplies Department and the department to which I have been placed in charge relates to the matter of rendering relief to the affected people——

(There was uproar and cries of "We won't hear you", from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: If you create disorder like this I will have to take stronger measures.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: We mean no disrespect to the Chair but why should he say all this nonsense?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I have taken all possible measures——

(There was again uproarious noise from the Opposition benches and the voice of the Hon'ble Minister was drowned.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. If you are not satisfied with the Hon'ble Minister's speech that does not give you any right to create this *golmal*. Let him finish. We must rise in the course of five or six minutes.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: He is making false statements.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, before I conclude——

(There was again loud noise and the Hon'ble Minister's voice was drowned.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Mukerjea, will you please resume your seat. It appears that the House, at least the Opposition, is not in a mood to listen to you at this late hour. (Cries of "yes", "yes" from the Opposition benches.) I find that you are not in a mood but that is no reason why you should create disorder in this House. It is already 5-40. It was arranged that we should rise at 5-30. It is already late. I allowed a little more time to you because I thought you would be satisfied with certain figures that are being given to you. He was going to make his statement. If you are not satisfied I cannot detain the House during the month of *Ramzan* for any length of time. I will put the matter immediately to vote and will ask Mr. Mukerjea to finish his speech in 2 minutes.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: All measures necessary for relief during distress, whether you call it famine or——

(At this stage there was again uproarious noise from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mr. M. A. H. ISPAHANI: I rise on a point of order, Sir. Is it open to the Opposition not to listen to the reply to the charges that have been made by the members of the Opposition? Is this sportsmanship?

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Talking of sportsmanship to a starving province! He ought to have been ashamed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. I take it, Mr. Mukerjea, that you have finished. I am putting the motions to vote.

The motion of Khan Bahadur A. M. L. Rahman that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Syed Badrudduja that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Srijut Manindra Bhusan Sinha that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Adwaita Kumar Maji that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

Mr. J. W. R. STEVEN: Sir, I beg to withdraw my motion.

The motion of Mr. J. W. R. Steven that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then by leave of the House withdrawn.

The motion of Mr. Shahedali that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri that the demand of Rs. 3,52,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—69.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badrudduja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. S.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sanker.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.

Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—115.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rashid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Mr. Syamaprasad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Khan Sahib Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F., O.B.E.
Hodge, Mr. H. R.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McGregor, Mr. G. G.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Miles, Mr. C. W.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R., M.B.E.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zillur Rahman Shah Choudhury, Maulvi.

Ayes being 69 and Noes 115 the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that a sum of Rs. 3,52,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 21st September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Tuesday, the 21st September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 189 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Petition from security prisoners of Rajshahi Jail regarding their belongings at the time of release.

*56. **Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether any petition has been received by the Government from the security prisoners of Rajshahi Jail to the effect that all those who are being released from that jail are being deprived of all the belongings excepting only the clothing on their person?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) I have since issued orders whereby security prisoners can take with them articles supplied by Government during the year prior to their release and all articles purchased by them wholly or partly with their own money.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Has this order been given effect to?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes.

Failure of crops in Bankura and Bishnupur subdivisions.

*57. **Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department aware that there was practically a total failure of paddy crops in major portion of Bishnupur subdivision and in considerable part of the Sadar subdivision of the Bankura district last year?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the total amount of agricultural loan sanctioned for the district this year;

(*ii*) the amount actually spent; and

(*iii*) the amount of agricultural loan given to the—

(1) Bishnupur subdivision, and

(2) Sadar subdivision, separately?

(*c*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether any gratuitous relief was given;

(*ii*) whether any test work was opened; and

(*iii*) if so, the amount spent on each head for the people of the said area?

(*d*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that acute distress prevails in the subdivisions for the failure of crop?

(*e*) If so, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of taking necessary steps for—

(*i*) giving gratuitous relief, and

(*ii*) opening test relief works?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) Government are aware that there was a serious failure of paddy crops in certain parts of the two subdivisions, but there was not "a practically complete failure". There is distress in varying degrees in most parts of the district.

(*b*)(*i*) Rs.6,00,000.

(*ii*) Rs.4,18,600.

(*iii*) (1) Rs.1,50,000, and (2) Rs.3,00,000.

(*c*) (*i*), (*ii*) and (*d*) Yes. Rs.1,60,000 for gratuitous relief and Rs.2,00,000 for test works have been sanctioned.

(*c*) (*iii*) Gratuitous relief, Rs.1,03,393; test relief, Rs.1,60,685; loans under paddy husking scheme, Rs.2,850.

(*e*) These steps have already been taken.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In answer (*a*) the Hon'ble Minister states that there was a serious failure of paddy crops but not a practically complete failure; is he prepared to give the percentage of the failure?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is not possible. I want notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Is the Hon'ble Minister prepared to give us an idea as to the quantity of failure?

Mr. SPEAKER: He need not answer that. It is too vague a question.

Allowance admissible to jurors in Rajshahi Division.

*58. **Khan Bahadur SHAH ABDUR RAUF:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what is the rate of travelling allowances and daily allowances given to the jurors (both ordinary and special) in different districts of the Rajshahi Division; and

(*ii*) when this rate was int_____.

(*b*) Do the Government contemplate to revise the rate in view of the rise of the cost of living?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID (on behalf of the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hosain, Khan Bahadur): (*a*) (*i*) Under the rules a juror attending court gets for the first and last days of attendance a daily allowance not less than Re. 1 and not more than Rs. 5 which should not exceed the actual travelling expenses. He gets an allowance not exceeding Rs. 2 if an ordinary juror or Rs. 3 if a special juror for each day of actual attendance in court for the second day of attendance on being chosen to serve as a juror until his discharge. If the trial last more than two weeks the presiding officer of the court may, at his discretion, allow him a daily allowance at an increased rate not exceeding Rs. 5 per diem from the beginning of the third week till the date of discharge.

(*ii*) The existing rate was revised in 1932 and amended in 1939.

(*b*) The matter will engage the attention of Government.

Mr. SHAHED ALI: In view of the answer (*a*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether these scales of travelling and daily allowances as laid down in the rules are applicable in the case of jurors in the Chittagong Division? Sir, you will be surprised to learn that jurors attending in the district of Tippera are not allowed more than 8 annas daily for their meals.

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: So far as I know, they are

Mr. SHAHED ALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to make an enquiry as to the rate of allowance given to the jurors for their meals?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes, necessary enquiries will be made.

Cancellation of transfer order of Superintendent of Excise, Darjeeling.

***59. Mr. DAMBER SINGH GURUNG:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest and Excise Department be pleased to state if it is a fact that the present Superintendent of Excise posted in Darjeeling was ordered to be transferred in September or October last year but the transfer order was subsequently cancelled?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREM HARI BARMA: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) In the interest of the public service.

Fixation of prices of raw jute by the Indian Jute Mills.

***60. Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether it is a fact that the Indian Jute Mills have fixed their purchase prices of raw jute at Rs.19, Rs.17 and Rs.14 per maund for top, middle and bottom qualities of jute, respectively;

(*ii*) whether those prices were fixed in order to enable the jute mills to supply a big order for hessian from the United States Government at a price of Rs.26 per 100 yards;

(*iii*) whether the Provincial Government have approved of the fixation of those prices;

(*iv*) if so, while approving of the prices, was any consideration given to the fact that only 23 seers of raw jute is required for manufacturing 100 yards of hessian; and

(*v*) while considering the question of fixation of the prices of raw jute, was any consideration given to the relation between the prices of raw jute and those of paddy and other essential articles of living?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what prices have been proposed to be paid to the jute growers; and

(*ii*) what steps have been or are proposed to be taken to ensure the payment of the proposed prices to the jute growers?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be further pleased to state whether the Government have been considering the question of buying the entire jute crop from the jute growers at economic prices and of supplying the same to the mills?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin): (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) Yes.

(*iii*) The Provincial Government were not consulted before these prices were fixed.

(*iv*) and (*v*) Do not arise.

(*b*)(*i*) No proposal has been made with regard to the prices to be paid to the jute growers.

(*ii*) Does not arise.

(*c*) No.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government can interfere with the arrangements arrived at by the Indian Jute Mills' Association?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No; it is their private arrangement. The arrangement has been made as between the mills by the Indian Jute Mills' Association.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*) (*iv*) and (*v*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in the light of a proper costing of hessian manufacture and also the current commodity prices Government did not feel that the prices fixed by the Indian Jute Mills' Association are extremely inadequate?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Government feels so and as a matter of fact Government represented to them that a higher price of jute is justified because of the abnormal rise in the prices of other commodities.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the demand made by the Hon'ble Minister, does the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of fixing a minimum price of jute immediately?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Government do not consider it practicable at the present moment.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: In view of the answer given by the honourable member that Government consider the fixation of a higher price necessary, will he be pleased to say whether Government has suggested a higher price for jute?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: What is the amount suggested?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No amount was suggested; the price that has been fixed by the Indian Jute Mills' Association was considered to be inadequate and Government suggested that a higher price should be fixed commensurate with the prevailing high prices of other commodities.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is within the competence of Government to stop monopolist control of jute prices against the interests of the jute-growers of the province?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That question does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is for the Speaker to decide and not for the honourable member. With reference to answer (*a*) (*iii*) that Government was not consulted beforehand and also that the question does not arise, my specific question has been whether the Government of Bengal is competent to stop any monopolistic commercial organisation from pressing down the prices of jute in this province against the interests of the growers of Bengal.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have understood your question, but you are asking for an opinion as to the competency of the Government.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir, for the answer previous to this was that this was a private arrangement with which Government could not interfere. Therefore this question follows, otherwise I would not have done it.

Mr. SPEAKER: It may follow but after all it is a question of legal opinion—the competency of the Bengal Government in regard to interference with monopoly.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Has the Government of Bengal taken competent legal advice to see how the attempt of the Jute Mills' Association to press down the prices of jute against the interests of the jute-growers could be averted?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: In their opinion the question of taking legal opinion is not necessary.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What action has the Government of Bengal taken to thwart or prevent the attempt of certain monopolistic trading organisations from playing mischief with the unhappy jute-growers of the province?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: They have written to the Indian Jute Mills' Association.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government were informed, if not consulted, by the Indian Jute Mills' Association of their intention to fix the prices?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: They were informed at a later stage. After the prices were fixed, they were informed.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Is it a fact that these prices were fixed in view of an order from the United States Government?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That question has been answered.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Is it a fact that if the prices were increased, they would not be able to fulfil this order?

Mr. SPEAKER: How can Government say that?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: It is not possible for Government to say that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will Government be pleased to state if it is a fact or if it has come to their notice that the Secretary of the Indian Jute Mills' Association circulated a letter to the members of the Jute Mills' Association—Indians as well as Europeans—in which he specifically mentioned that they had no consultation with the Government of Bengal and they had come to the decision after having discussed the matter with them?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: We are not aware of that circular and this allegation is false and has no foundation.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when the Jute Mills' Association has been written to and if any reply has been received?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: I ask for notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the original proposal of the Indian Jute Mills' Association was to fix the minimum prices at, on an average, two rupees lower than the present figures of 14, 17 and 19 and that it was after consultation with the Government of Bengal representatives that the prices were raised to Rs. 14, 17 and 19?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That is not a fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: *He has already given the reply that at the time of the fixation the Government of Bengal were not consulted.*

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My question was that it may be that at the actual time of fixation the Government of Bengal did not give their actual approval, but my question was whether either before or in the course of this fixation the Government of Bengal was at any stage consulted and the actual figures were arrived at after consultation with the Government of Bengal.

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No, they were never consulted.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister state the reasons why Government do not consider the desirability of fixing the minimum prices?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: I have already replied that they do not consider it practicable in view of certain other circumstances.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: What are those other circumstances?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: There are many questions that require consideration—grading of jute, warehouses and all these things have got to be arranged for before any minimum prices can be fixed.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is Government aware that the present ruling prices for jute in the mufassal are very much lower even on the parity of the fixed prices of Rs. 14, 17 and 19 that were determined by the Jute Mills' Association.

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes, Government are aware and it is about Rs. 13, i.e., Rs. 3 or 4 lower than the fixed price.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that one of the potent factors for this reduction in the prices is the closing down of the jute mills for some time on the alleged plea of want of coal?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid that question does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will Government please state what steps they have taken to see that even the minimum prices recognised by the Jute Mills' Association are provided and given to the jute-growers of Bengal in the mufassal?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Government, of course, is trying but there are other factors which are responsible for this state of affairs.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: বর্ত্তমানে যে সেক্রেটারী সাহেব বললেন "other factors" European Associationকে সন্তুষ্ট করাই কি সেই other factors ?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will Government be pleased to state if they are aware that recommendations have been made by the Indian Central Jute Committee sitting in this province demanding that the procedure adopted

by the Indian Jute Mills be scrapped and requesting the Government of India as well as the Government of Bengal to take necessary steps to see that reasonable prices may be assured to the jute-growers?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: Yes, that is so.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What action has been taken on the resolution of the Indian Central Jute Committee forwarded to the Government of Bengal at least if not to the Government of India as well?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That is for the Central Government. We have got nothing to do with that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will Government please state if any representation has been made by the present Government of Bengal to the Government of India to move them to take necessary steps as per the resolution or recommendation of the Indian Central Jute Committee?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: In their own way they have made their representation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: When was the representation made?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: In the first part of September last.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What was the reply received?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: No reply has been received, but it has been decided that there would be further discussion at the end of October next.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: After the jute is sold out!

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government contemplate taking any effective definite steps to compel the Association to raise prices of jute for the benefit of agriculturists?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: It is beyond the power of Government to take any effective measure to compel the Jute Mills' Association. It can be done only by mutual agreement.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Will the Government be pleased to state what steps do they propose to take in order to raise the price of raw jute beyond the price fixed by the Jute Mills' Association before jute passes from the hands of the jute-growers?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: That question does not arise.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid that question is relevant. It is a question about the fixation of a certain price, and his question is whether Government propose to take any action.

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: The market price is already lower.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Bengal Services (Revision of) Leave Rules, 1934.

24. Maulvi ABDUL HAKIM: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department aware that—

(*i*) the Bengal Services (Revision of) Leave Rules, 1934, has curtailed the provision of leave admissible under the Fundamental Leave Rules;

(*ii*) there is a feeling amongst the officers of the Vacation Department over this matter; and

(*iii*) there is no provision for leave on full average pay even on medical grounds?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*iii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action, if any, he proposes to take in the matter?

MINISTER in charge of the EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) I shall examine the question.

Family allowance of certain security prisoner.

25. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) Babu Girindra Kumar Bose Neogy was arrested on the 15th September, 1940, and now detained in Midnapore Central Jail; and

(*ii*) he has been granted a family allowance of Rs.35 per month not from his date of arrest but from the 1st April, 1942?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of granting him the allowance from the date of his arrest as is done in case of other prisoners?

(*c*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) the said prisoner applied on 10th April, 1943, 26th May, 1943, and 19th June, 1943, for increasing the amount of allowance per month due to war condition and abnormal rise of prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life; and

(*ii*) his wife has also applied for increasing the allowance?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of increasing the allowance?

(*e*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) the wife of the said prisoner has not been getting the allowance granted from March, 1943; and

(ii) the said prisoner applied on the 29th April, 1943 and 14th June, 1943, for the same?

(*f*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps he is proposing to take for the regular payment of the allowance?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME (JAILS) DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*), (*c*) and (*e*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

(*d*) The allowance has been enhanced to Rs.50 per month with effect from the 1st April, 1943.

(*f*) Necessary funds have since been allotted to the District Magistrate.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: From answers (*a*) and (*b*) it appears that some security prisoners are granted allowances with effect from the date of their release while others are not. Will the Government be pleased to state what is the reason of this invidious distinction?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: So far as this security prisoner is concerned, it was found that he had an income from his *khamar* and *taluk* land, and therefore Government did not think that his family would be suffering from his detention. For this reason no family allowance was granted to him.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: From the answer just now given do I understand the honourable member to say that after a little time he lost that income?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It was subsequently found by Government that his family was in distress. Therefore a compassionate family allowance of Rs. 35 was sanctioned.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: এটা কি সত্যি যে বার বার enquiry করার পরে ঠিক করা হয়েছে যে তার সম্পত্তির যা income Government ধরে ছিলেন সেটা ঠিক নয়, সেটাই Police Report ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is not so. It was found at first that he had an income, but subsequently it was found that because of the reason that there was no collection, the family was in distress, and, therefore, Government sanctioned a compassionate family allowance.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA: Is it a fact that there was a declaration made by Government that the allowance of those security prisoners whose allowances were determined from April, 1942, will be increased cent. per cent.?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The present Ministry adopted a liberal policy so far as the allowances of these security prisoners are concerned. They had decided that the allowances of the security prisoners sanctioned in the previous year would be increased by cent. per cent. and those sanctioned during the present year, i.e., from 1st January up to the time when this policy was adopted by the present Ministry, would be increased by 50 per cent.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA: In view of this admission that the allowances sanctioned in the previous year would be increased cent. per cent., will the Government be pleased to state why this allowance was not increased?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes. It has been increased after the present Ministry came into power.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA: The question is about determining the amount of allowance. It was the policy of Government that the allowance would be increased cent. per cent., that is, from Rs. 35 to Rs. 70. Why this allowance was not increased to Rs. 70?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Government be pleased to state why April, 1942, was selected as the date from which the allowance would be granted?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The allowance was granted from May, but on a representation being made, Government thought fit to give effect to it from the beginning of the financial year.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: এটা কি সত্যি কথা যে proper enquiryতে পাওয়া গিয়েছিল যে তাদের যা সম্পত্তির আয় তার এক তৃতীয়াংশের মালিক হ'ল এই prisoner এবং তাদের সম্পত্তির আয় হয় ১৩৲ টাকা আর জমির ভাগ পড়ে তিন বিঘা কি চার বিঘা এবং সে জন্যই তাকে এই ৩৫৲ টাকা তখন তাকে maintenance দেওয়া হয়েছিল ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: No. That is not correct. Government found that he had not only *khamar* land but also *taluk* land and his income ran to several hundreds of rupees.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the amount of allowance that has been granted?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Rs. 30 with effect from the 1st February, 1943, but granted by the present Ministry in July.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the number of dependants this security prisoner has got to maintain?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to answer (*a*) (*ii*) to (*vi*), will the Government be pleased to state if any enquiry was made into the statements made in the question?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, an enquiry was made.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In answer (*a*)(*ii*) to (*vi*) Government say that they have no information. May I know what is the Government's source of information as to the income of this gentleman?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It was a report from the District Officer.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the admission made that an enquiry was made, will Government be pleased to state what was the result of the enquiry?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It was found that his income was much less than Rs. 150. It was calculated that his income would not be more than Rs. 50 to Rs. 60 per month.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will Government be pleased to state whether he was the only earning member of the family?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Grant of allowance to Dr. S. N. Choudhury's family.

26. Mr. P. BANERJEE: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department aware that—

(*i*) Dr. S. N. Chowdhury, B.SC., has been interned at Suchiya, post office Barama, district Chittagong, from the 26th October, 1942, under rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules;

(*ii*) he was the Principal of the Homeopathic College at Chittagong and had an income of Rs.150 per month;

(*iii*) he is the only earning member in the family consisting of 9 members including an aged father of 80 years;

(*iv*) he has to defray the educational expenses of one boy studying in the 4th year class B.A. in the Ashutosh College, Chittagong;

(*v*) he has to pay the premium on a life insurance of Rs.2,000;

(*vi*) his income being totally stopped, the family is starving; and

(*vii*) a petition was sent by the wife of the detenu to the Government for allowance?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any action has been taken for granting any allowance?

(*c*) If not, why not?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME (POLITICAL) DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) An order has been passed by the District Magistrate, Chittagong, restricting the movements of one Babu Sachi Mohan Chowdhury of village Suchiya, post office Barama, district Chittagong.

(*ii*) to (*vi*) I have no information.

(*vii*) His wife applied for an allowance.

(*b*) An allowance has been granted to him.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. May I enquire if questions are being held back in your office?

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: But my information is that at least one question from the Revenue Department was sent to this office about four days ago, and I do not know if it is in transmission somewhere. Government is being pestered due to large accumulation of questions. Attempts should be made to give more questions to this office. The Assembly Department is being pressed that they should place all the questions that they get before the House. We have got plenty of time at our disposal for questions, and we particularly request you to see that no question is held back in this office.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: I may add one or two sentences. I sent notices of several questions for reply, during the last session and the session before last. Those questions remain unreplied as yet, not to speak of questions given notice of in this session.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another point. Dr. Sanyal's point is quite different. Dr. Sanyal insists that questions already answered by Government, namely, questions of which answers have been sent to the Assembly Department may not be delayed. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes.) I assure you that I shall carefully look into the matter and see that no answer is delayed in the Assembly Department.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Delay is one thing and this is another. I submit, Sir, that all questions received in this office up to date or the previous day should be placed before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: It may not be possible to place questions received up to the previous day, because they have got to be printed and sent back. But everything possible to expedite the matter will be done. This much I can assure you. As regards the other matter that is a bigger question and I shall look into it later on.

Disappearance of rice from markets.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Before you begin the proceedings of the House, Sir, may I have your leave to draw the attention of the House and also the attention of Government to the terrible situation which has arisen in the province, particularly in the rural areas because of the complete disappearance of rice from the markets?

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to enter into controversies as to the reasons for this disappearance; nor do I want to make a speech. But I suppose it is universally admitted that the situation has become desperate because of this disappearance of foodstuff. I have received numerous telegrams and I am sure the members on both sides of the House have received telegrams

from their constituencies describing the situation specially in the villages. I wish, Sir, to request the Hon'ble Chief Minister—I am sorry the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies is not here and he has not been attending the session regularly—I wish, Sir, to request the Hon'ble Chief Minister to make a statement on behalf of Government taking us into confidence and telling us what steps Government have taken to ensure the supply of rice in the markets; and if steps have not been taken, why no steps have been taken and what steps they intend taking in the immediate future. I am sure they can make a statement today, but if they want a little time I won't object to that. There can be no objection to wait till tomorrow. I feel, and I am sure every member on this side of the House at least feels that in the absence of an assurance as regards food supply and when death rates are mounting up the whole proceedings of this House, the debates, the speeches have become absolutely unreal. I do not mean any disrespect to you or to the House but the whole thing seems to me and to my friends on this side of the House as farcical.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Either give us food or get out.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: Attention has been drawn to the serious situation caused by the disappearance of rice from the market. Everybody will admit that it is a very serious thing. So, I do not think we can at this stage allow a discussion on it. You will have ample opportunities later to discuss it.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I just want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Chief Minister to the names of places——

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: On a point of order, Sir. This is not the way how a subject can be brought before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. You cannot waste the time of the House. This is a matter which is so serious——

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Not to them!

Mr. SPEAKER: Serious to everybody, and I think the Leader of the House will not say that it is not serious. If he does that is a different thing. But I cannot allow a discussion on this subject. That is the real point at issue and you will remember that, Dr. Mookerjee. If you just want to cite any particular instance I may allow you but if you want to raise a discussion I cannot allow it.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I am not going to discuss it, Sir.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. The correct Parliamentary procedure is that if there is an important question which the Leader of the Opposition wishes to bring before the House at a time when it has not been provided in the agenda common courtesy demand that Government should be notified and then the thing is brought up. But I find Sir, that Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy has been allowed

to make a statement on a subject which has not been in the agenda. Government had not been informed that either the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wanted to make a statement. If they had done so then the Minister for Civil Supplies would have been here and he would have been ready to make a statement or give a reply. I do not think, Sir, beyond the statement of Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy you can allow any other statement. As for Government reply, I hope, Sir, we will be able to make a statement tomorrow after question time.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I am not saying that the reply should be given today.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir Nazimuddin rose on a point of order. He said in the first place that it would have been fair to the Government (A voice: to the House), also to the House, though it is not strictly a question for the House, if the Leader of the House had been previously notified. The next point that he has asked me to rule is that no discussion should be allowed or that nobody else should be allowed to make any statement. Strictly speaking a matter of this description ought to be brought to the notice of the House only by the Leader of the Opposition. That is the proper procedure as far as I know. Unfortunately the Leader of the Opposition is not here and that is why Mr. Roy made the statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: There are several leaders of Opposition.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Several opposition groups.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Mookerjee, what is the thing you want to say? I am not going to allow you to make any long statement. If you have got an instance or two to cite I shall allow you. Please say what you have to say in two or three sentences.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: What I wanted to say is this. During the last 3 days I have received telegrams from the following places: Pirojpur, Brahmanbaria, Madaripur, Khulna, Narsingdhi, Baira, Hossainpur, Narail, Nilphamari, Barisal, Manickganj, Chandpur, Ghatal and from several other places. The report has come that no rice is available and there is terrible suffering. Now these telegrams are from non-official persons and organisations. We have had occasions to approach several District and Subdivisional Officers during the last few days enquiring where relief work should be started within their respective jurisdiction and the invariable reply we have received——

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: From officials?

Mr. SPEAKER: The first part is enough for this purpose.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: The second part is that it is confirmed by the replies that we have been receiving which state that relief is important, relief is necessary, non-official efforts will be greatly appreciated but no foodgrains are available locally. That is a fact to which I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I am very sorry, Sir, that after your ruling you have allowed the honourable member to make a statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry I allowed Dr. Mookerjee to make a statement containing two parts. The first part is that rice is not avilable. The other part is about the difficulty of non-official organisations to give relief on account of the non-availability of rice. I do not think there was anything wrong.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

28—Jails and Convict Settlements.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 56,74,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements".

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I take up the cut motions I have got to tell you, gentlemen, one thing. It appears to me that speeches have been incorporated in the cut motions. This is rather unusual. The real cut motion is this, that the demand be reduced by Rs. 100 and you state certain things only to give an indication as to the lines on which you want to speak.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir,—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. I think it would be better if you simply move that the demand be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about (taking the case of Mr Dhirendra Nath Datta's motion) first, the failure of Government to release political security prisoners, etc.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Before you give your ruling I would like to submit this. We knew that the time at our disposal this time was very short and in order to minimise your trouble and also the trouble of the members I as whip of the party actually advised members belonging to my group to give notice of their cut motions in a manner that if time was not available they should just get up and say that "I move the motion standing in my name". This is only to help you and the Assembly Department. That was why I wanted to have the motions placed before the House which would be self-explanatory.

Mr. SPEAKER: At the same time I must say that this is not the way in which the cut motions should be moved.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion with a view to raise a discussion about matters referred to in item 7 (*a*) to (*f*), namely—

(*a*) the failure of the Government to release political security prisoners generally and continued detention of such prisoners under rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules although the application thereof

in a number of cases had been declared to be illegal and *ultra vires* by the High Court of Calcutta as well as by the Federal Court of India;

(*b*) failure to grant adequate family allowances to all security prisoners specially having regard to the abnormal rise in prices of food-grains and other necessaries of life;

(*c*) the policy of the Government in not granting any allowances to the security prisoners who are members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly who had other incomes of which they have been deprived by their detention in jail without trial;

(*d*)) general policy regarding the interview, despatch of letters;

(*e*) non-supply of articles, cots, chairs, etc., in many jails to which they are entitled; and

(*f*) about the failure of the Government to release the political prisoners convicted under the Defence of India Rules by the Special Magistrate under the Special Courts Ordinance which has been found to be illegal and *ultra vires* and the Validating Ordinance (Ordinance XIX of 1943) has also been found not to legalise the conviction and sentence.

I also move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) insufficiency of diet supplied to the Division III prisoners;

(*ii*) inadequacy of clothing of Division III prisoners;

(*iii*) non-supply of mosquito curtains to them;

(*iv*) absence of dining sheds for Division III prisoners in many jails of the province;

(*v*) crowding of the prisoners in one room contrary to rules of accommodation;

(*vi*) inadequate supply of medicine;

(*vii*) cruel treatments meted out to them on flimsy pretexts;

(*viii*) cruel mode of punishments;

(*ix*) non-supply of any newspaper to literate Division III prisoners;

(*x*) absence of any arrangement for removing the illiteracy of Division III prisoners; and

(*xi*) system of compelling them to use the same articles for drinking as well as for latrine purposes without having any regard to any hygienic principle.

Sir, both the motions are so worded that they are self-explanatory, but I shall speak now on clauses (*c*) and (*f*) of motion No. 7. Clause (*a*) has been properly discussed in connection with the adjournment motion. With regard to item (*b*), I would appeal to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the

Jails Department through you, Sir, to grant adequate family allowances having regard to the present abnormal situation as a result of the abnormal rise in the prices of all articles. Sir, the only offence these security prisoners have committed is their intense love for their country and for that they have been detained in prison houses, and justice demands that they should be given adequate family allowances. I beg to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the recent declaration made by Government that family allowances will be raised by cent. per cent. in respect of some prisoners whose allowances were determined before April, 1942, and that the allowances will be increased by 50 per cent. with respect to other prisoners. I understand that although the allowances have been increased in some cases they were not increased in accordance with the declaration made. In one case I know that the allowance has been increased from Rs. 35 to Rs. 50; that shows that the increase has been far less cent. per cent. increase promised. I know also that so far as prisoners in my district are concerned, no increase in allowances has been sanctioned although the present allowances are completely inadequate having regard to their number of dependants, to their earnings before their detention and also to the present abnormally high prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir. Cut motion No. 7 raises certain points which have already been covered by the adjournment motion which was discussed only the other day. Rule 39 of the Rules of Assembly Procedure says that a motion must not raise a question substantially identical with one on which the Assembly has given a decision in the same session. Therefore, I submit that motion No. 7 is out of order.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: I submit that clause (*a*) of motion No. 7 relates to the adjournment motion, but the other clauses of that motion, namely, (*b*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*) and (*f*) have never been discussed in this session.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already said that there is no question of moving the whole matter at all. I have already said that a motion should be moved as follows: that the demand be reduced by so and so. I think Mr. Datta has done that and he is speaking on his motion.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir. I submit that clause (*a*) of the motion should be deleted.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, your ruling, we presume, was that in moving a motion the member need not read out the whole of his motion but that he may merely say that the demand be reduced by Rs. 100 to save time and procedure; but I presume that you will not disallow the motions as they are printed and given notice of being incorporated in the proceedings of the Assembly. Otherwise, members will have to take more time to elaborate the whole thing and our object will be frustrated.

Mr. SPEAKER: My indication was that the member concerned may simply say this that the demand be reduced by Rs. 100 only to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to do something.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As far as motion No. 7 is concerned I should like to know what is the actual wording of the motion that is going to be incorporated in the proceedings, as mentioned by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the actual motion, Mr. Datta, that you have moved?

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: So far as motion No. 7 is concerned, I am excluding clause (*a*) of the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to know from you, Mr. Datta, whether you have mentioned clause (*a*) of the motion or not when you moved it.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the fact that the adjournment motion dealing with the same subject as clause (*a*) has already been discussed, I beg to exclude this clause which I have mentioned when moving the motion. But so far as clauses (*b*) to (*f*) are concerned, I submit that they raise important points and should remain.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Now that Mr. Datta has withdrawn clause (*a*) of the motion I want to know, Sir, whether clause (*a*) will go into the proceedings or not.

Mr. SPEAKER: No; it will not form part of the proceedings.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: So far as clause (*f*) is concerned, it raises an important question. Probably the Hon'ble Minister is aware of the fact that the Special Courts Ordinance was found to be illegal and *ultra vires* by the High Court of Calcutta and the Federal Court of India. After the special prerogatives were found to be *ultra vires* there was a Validating Ordinance of 1943 legalising the convictions and sentences that were passed by the Special Courts under the Defence of India Rules. This Validating Ordinance was also questioned in the Calcutta High Court and the Calcutta High Court pronounced the judgment that the Validating Ordinance has not legalised the convictions and sentences but it has legalised detention in jails. This ruling has been reported in 47—Calcutta Weekly Notes. In view of the fact that the Validating Ordinance has been found not to legalise the convictions and sentences, the only course open to Government is to release the prisoners, to set them at liberty and then, if necessary, to re-arrest them. I want to draw the attention of Government to this ruling and I want to impress it on Government that those prisoners who had been convicted by the Special Courts Ordinance should be released at once but if Government think that some of them should be kept under arrest, they may re-arrest them, but they must be set at liberty at once.

So far as the other clauses are concerned, I need not deal with them in detail.

With regard to the grievances of Division III prisoners I submit that their grievances are many but the time at my disposal is very short. I submit that Government will please see their way to remedy these grievances.

With these words, Sir, I beg to move both the motions 7 and 8, and I hope the House will accept them both.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion with a view to raising a discussion about—

(*i*) the general policy of Government in the matter of administration of Jails and Convict Settlements;

(*ii*) the failure of the Government to deal with the jail officers even in cases when the attention of the Government is drawn to their vagaries;

(*iii*) treatment of ordinary prisoners as well as of security prisoners in jails; and

(*iv*) the family allowances of the security prisoners.

মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, ১৯২১ সাল থেকে এ পর্য্যন্ত বহুবার জেলের ভিতর, যেমন সেণ্ট্রাল জেলগুলি, মেদিনীপুর, ঢাকা, আলিপুর, প্রেসিডেন্সী, এবং বহু ডিষ্ট্রীক্ট ও সাব-জেলের ভিতর, যাতায়াত করে, জেল সম্বন্ধে আমি কিছু বলবার দাবী রাখি। আমি এটা লক্ষ্য করেছি যে জেল চালাবার পদ্ধতি এবং নীতি পুরাণো দিনে যেমন ছিল, আজকেও ঠিক সেই রকমই আছে; বরং অনেক দিক দিয়ে খারাপ হয়েছে আরো। যদি কয়েদীদের সুখ-সুবিধার দিক দিয়ে দেখা যায় তাহলে দেখা যাবে যে যেখানে ৩০ জনের জায়গা ছিল সেখানে বোধ হয় বর্ত্তমানে আড়াই শো লোককে পোরা হয়, জিনিষপত্র যা তাদের প্রাপ্য তা তারা পায় না; এমন কি তাদের কাপড় চোপড় থেকে আরম্ভ করে যা কিছু তারা পেয়ে থাকে, ১৯২১ সালে যা পেয়েছে দেখেছি, এখন তারও অভাব হয়ে গিয়েছে। খাবার কথা ত বলাই বাহুল্য; কারণ মোটা ভাত আর ডাল যা তারা পায় তা দুর্গন্ধময়, মানুষের খাবার অযোগ্য। ডাল একেবারে সিদ্ধ হয় না, অখাদ্য। কয়েদীদের তৈরী তরকারি কয়েদীদের পাওয়ার কথা, কিন্তু তা সব চুরি হয়, তারা পায় বাগানের আগাছা। ইংরাজিতে যাকে বলে amenities of life তা থেকে তারা একেবারে বঞ্চিত।

কিন্তু খাওয়া, পরা, শোয়া ইত্যাদি বিষয়ে দুঃখ যত কঠিনই হ'ক না মানুষ তাও বরং সহ্য করতে পারে, কিন্তু মানুষের প্রতি মানুষের যে মর্ম্মান্তিক অবমাননা জেলখানায় বিরাজ করছে তা যে একেবারেই অসহ্য। এই হতভাগ্য পরাধীন দেশে মানুষের প্রতি মানুষের এই অবমাননা বাইরেও আছে, কিন্তু জেলের পাঁচিলের মধ্যে তা বহু লক্ষ গুণ বেশী। বাইরে তবুও Public opinion বলে সামান্য কিছু যা আছে, কারাগারের পাঁচিলের মধ্যে তাও নেই। কয়েদীদের কথা কে বলে, কে শোনে। তাই মানুষের প্রতি মানুষের অবমাননা এখানে চরমে উঠেছে। পূর্ব্বের মতই অবাধে চলছে, কিছুমাত্র কমে নি। অসহায় কয়েদীদের উপর পূর্ব্বের মতই মারপিট পর্য্যন্ত চলে। কয়েকটী দৃষ্টান্ত আমি নিজের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে দিচ্ছি এবং মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি।

Indian warderরা যত কেন বিদ্বান ও বুদ্ধিমান হ'ন না, তাঁরা কোন দিন কোন জেলের Jailor হতে পারেন না। অনেক Matriculation বা Intermediate পাশ

করা Indian warder আছেন, Jailor হওয়া ত দূরের কথা তাঁরা কোন দিন Deputy Jailor পর্য্যন্ত হন নি। কিন্তু একটী অদ্ভুত নিয়ম আছে যার বলে European warderরা আলিপুর, প্রেসিডেন্সী প্রভৃতি বড় বড় সেণ্ট্রাল জেলগুলিতে Jailor নিযুক্ত হন। নিয়মটীতে এই বলা আছে যে European warderদের Jailor হতে হলে যেখানে সেই জেলের স্থিতি সেই জেলার colloquial বাংলা ভাষা ভাল করে জানা দরকার। কিন্তু এদিকে কোন দিন দৃষ্টি দেওয়া হয় না; বাংলা জানা ত দূরের কথা। এমন সব European warder Jailor নিযুক্ত হন যাঁরা এক লাইন শুদ্ধ ইংরাজি পর্য্যন্ত লিখতে পারেন না। Indian warderরা ২৫৲ টাকার বেশী মাহিনায় নিযুক্ত হন না আর সেই একই কাজ করাব জন্য • European warderরা ১৫০৲, ১৭৫৲ টাকায় নিয়োজিত হন। অধিকাংশই এদের মধ্যে অজ মূর্খ। আলিপুর জেলে হিন্দু-মুসলমান B. C. S. পাশ করা গুণী বাঙ্গালী ডেপুটী জেলার থাকা সত্ত্বেও সম্প্রতি এই রকম একজন European warder Jailor নিযুক্ত হয়েছেন। European warder থাকা কালে তাঁর খুব সুনাম ছিল না। রাজনৈতিক কয়েদীদের সঙ্গে পর্য্যন্ত কর্কশ ব্যবহার করতেন। ধাক্কা, গুতো অনেককেই দিয়েছেন। সম্প্রতি তিনি দু হাজাব আড়াই হাজাব কয়েদীব উপব Jailor নিযুক্ত হয়ে মাথা এক রকম তাঁর ঘুরে গিয়েছে। তাঁকে সামলায় এ সাধ্যি Superintendentএরও নেই। তিনি তাঁর সাদা চামড়ার জোরে Superintendent. Graduate ত ননই, Matriculation পাশ করেছেন কিনা সন্দেহ। ছিলেন Pressএর কর্ম্মচাবী, Jail Codeএব সঙ্গে পরিচয় পর্য্যন্ত নেই, জেলের কাজ কিছুই জানেন না। ফাইল, চিঠিপত্র সব কিছুব ব্যবস্থা করেন উচ্চ-শিক্ষিত হিন্দু-মুসলমান ডেপুটী জেলারগণ। এই ভদ্রলোক কোন বকমে সহি করে সাদা চামড়ার জোবে Superintendentগিবি করেন। এহেন Superintendent এবং এহেন Jailor দু সহস্রেব উপর কৃষ্ণাঙ্গ কয়েদীদেব ভাগ্য-বিধাতা। অতএব অবস্থা অনুমেয। Jailorএর প্রথম কীর্ত্তি শুনুন।

শ্রীযুক্ত অধীর চন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় Londonএব B.Sc. তিনি কবিবব ববীন্দ্রনাথেব ওখানে সুরুলে গঠনমূলক কাজের চার্য্যা-এ ছিলেন। তিনি Division II কয়েদী হিসাবে আলিপুব সেণ্ট্রাল জেলে আটক হন। তাঁর মত বিনয়ী, ভদ্র বন্দী কদাচিৎ দেখা যায়। ভূতপূর্ব্ব Jailor অধীব চন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় মহাশয়কে জেলেব কাপড চোপড সমুদয় না দিতে পারায় অধীর বাবুর নিজের কাপড় ব্যবহাবেব অনুমতি দিয়েছিলেন। পদগর্ব্বে মত্ত নূতন Jailor অধীব বাবুর গায়ে গেঞ্জি দেখে জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন কেন তিনি Division II কয়েদী হয়ে নিজের গেঞ্জি ব্যবহার করছেন। অধীর বাবু জানালেন যে Division IIএর প্রাপ্য সব জিনিষ এখনো তাঁকে দেওয়া হয়নি। Jailor কড়া হুকুম করলেন "এখনি গেঞ্জি খুলে ফেল।" অধীর বাবু প্রত্যুত্তরে জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন, তাঁর প্রাপ্য সব জিনিষ পাবার কি হবে? এতে Jailor ক্ষেপে উঠে তাঁর উপর লাফিয়ে পড়লেন। জোর করে গায়ের গেঞ্জি খুলে নিলেন এবং গলা ধাক্কাতে ধাক্কাতে ঠেলে নিয়ে গিয়ে Punishment Cellএ পুরে দিলেন। মারধর ত দূরের কথা Jailor কোন কয়েদীকে সাজাও দিতে পাবেন না। আমি The Bengal Jail Code, 6th Edition, থেকে বলছি Section 256 states *inter alia*, "The Jailor shall note every breach of Jail rules in the prisoner's history ticket and shall bring the offender before the Superintendent, but is strictly prohibited from punishing any prisone". তারপর মারধর সম্বন্ধে section 205 বলছে—Subordinate officers who commit any of

the following offences shall ordinarily be punished by dismissal or in serious cases when there is sufficient evidence to obtain conviction shall be prosecuted under section 54(*1*) of Act IX of 1894 :—

• • • • •

(3) Striking a prisoner, except in self-defence or to suppress an outbreak or unlawfully punishing any prisoner.

কিন্তু অধীর বাবুর উপর আক্রমণের এবং বেআইনী সাজার ফল কি হল? অধীর বাবু উচ্চ কর্তৃপক্ষের নিকট নালিশ করবেন বলে petition form চাইলেন; তা তাঁকে দেওয়া হল না। তিনি Superintendentকে বললেন, ফলে Superintendent উল্টে অধীর বাবুর কয়েক দিন remission কেটে নিলেন। Inspector-General এলেন, কিন্তু অধীর বাবুকে তাঁর সঙ্গে দেখা করতে দেওয়া হল না। অধীর বাবু নিজের নোট খাতায় I. G.র সঙ্গে সাক্ষাৎ প্রার্থনা করে ইয়োরোপীয়ান ওয়ার্ডার মারফৎ I.-G.র নিকট লিখে পাঠালেন। Jailor সেখানি হস্তগত করে I.-G.র হাতে ত দিলেনই না, খাতাখানি পর্য্যন্ত ফাঁক করলেন, আর কোন দিন ফেরৎ দিলেন না। Board of Visitors যখন অধীর বাবুর ward দিয়ে পরিদর্শন করে যাচ্ছিলেন, Superintendent অম্লানবদনে মিথ্যা বললেন—"এরা Security Prisoners. Security Prisonersদের জন্য অন্য পরিদর্শকগণ আছেন, Board of Visitorsরা তাঁদের পরিদর্শন করেন না। অধীর বাবু অবশ্য এতে হটলেন না। তিনি বললেন, তিনি সিকিউরিটি বন্দী না, তিনি Division II বন্দী এবং Jailor কর্তৃক গায়ে হাত দেওয়ার সম্বন্ধে লিখিত নালিশ দাখিল করলেন। Superintendent বেগতিক দেখে নেপথ্যে অধীর বাবুকে ডেকে ক্ষমা চেয়ে জিনিষটা ধামাচাপা দিলেন।

এর কয়েক দিন পরেই Jailor মারপিট করলেন বাংলার গান্ধি শ্রীযুক্ত সতীশচন্দ্র দাস গুপ্তের দলের উপর।

রাজবন্দীদের বিভিন্ন শ্রেণীতে বিভক্ত করা একটা প্রহসনের ব্যাপারে দাঁড়িয়েছে। আমি নিজে কখনও Division I কখনও II কখনও III হয়েছি। Dr. Profulla Chandra Ghosh সায়েন্সের ডাক্তার—যা আমাদের এতগুলি মন্ত্রীদের মধ্যে একজনও নন—অথচ তাঁকে trying Magistrate সেদিন কলকাতা কংগ্রেসের Reception Committeeর চেয়ারম্যান হওয়ার অপরাধে illiterate declare করে Division III করে দিলেন। আজও সেই প্রহসনই চলছে। রতনমণি চট্টোপাধ্যায় M.A., একজন লব্ধপ্রতিষ্ঠ সাহিত্যিক, তাঁকে Division III করা হল। ভবভূতি সোম M.A., তাঁকে Division III করা হল। প্রোফেসার বীরেশ্বর বসু ডবল M.A., ইংরাজিতে ও সংস্কৃতে M.A., প্রায় বার বৎসর B.E.S.এ থেকে গভর্ণমেণ্ট কলেজে প্রোফেসারী করেন। তিনি যক্ষ্মা রোগে আক্রান্ত হয়ে ভুগছিলেন, তা সত্ত্বেও তাঁকে Division III করা হল।

এই সব কর্ম্মীরা খাঁটী গান্ধিপন্থী। জেলের প্রত্যেকটী আইন এঁরা পালন করতেন। স্বেচ্ছায় কাজ করতেন। সতীশ বাবুর অক্লান্ত চেষ্টায় আলিপুর জেলের মৃতকল্প ডেয়ারী ও তাঁত বিভাগ পুনর্জীবিত হল। স্বয়ং I.-G. পর্য্যন্ত এ খবর জানেন। রতনমণি চট্টোপাধ্যায় প্রভৃতি কয়েকজন Division III বন্দী সতীশ বাবুর দক্ষিণ হস্ত ছিলেন। যাঁরা এতটা গান্ধিপন্থী নন তাঁরা এঁদের সহযোগিতার বাড়াবাড়ির জন্য, এঁদের সহযোগী কর্ম্মী co-operators বলে অভিহিত করতেন। এই co-operatorsরা বিনাকারণে কিরূপ জেলার কর্তৃক লাঠিপেটা হলেন ও সবুট লাথি খেলেন শুনুন।

সেদিন রবিবার। রবিবার ছুটির দিন—বিশ্রামের দিন। সকালে উঠে কাজে যেতে হয় না। বিছানা ছেড়ে উঠতেও তাই কিঞ্চিৎ বিলম্ব হয়। অতি প্রাতে ৯নং ওয়ার্ডের দোতলায় একজন জমাদার গুণতি করতে এলেন। একজন কি দুজন তখন বিছানা ছেড়ে উঠেছে, আর সকলেই ঘুমোচ্ছে। জমাদার যাঁরা জেগে ছিলেন তাঁদের জিজ্ঞাসা করল "তোমরা ফাইল করে গুণতি দেবে না?" তাঁরা উত্তর দিলেন "গত বহুদিন ধরে সব জমাদাররা ত শোয়া অবস্থাতেই গুণে নিয়ে যায়, সবাই ত শুয়ে আছে, এই অবস্থায় তুমি গুণে নাও না কেন?"

জমাদার বল্‌লে "ও তাহলে তোমরা গুণতি দেবে না। আচ্ছা দেখছি।" এই কথা বলে জমাদার পুনরায় দরজায় তালা দিয়ে চলে গেল এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বড় জমাদারকে রিপোর্ট করল। বড় জমাদার Jailorকে রিপোর্ট করল "৯নং ওয়ার্ডের বন্দীরা গুণতি দিচ্ছে না।" ঘটনাটা ঘটল ৯নং ওয়ার্ডের দোতলায়। ৯নং ওয়ার্ডের একতলার লোকেরা এর বিন্দু বিসর্গ অবগত রইল না। একতলায় ছিলেন রতনমনি চট্টোপাধ্যায় ও সতীশ বাবুর অন্যান্য সহকর্মীরা। Jailor শুনা মাত্র ২৫।৩০ জন লাঠিবাজী হিন্দুস্থানী ওয়ার্ডার এবং অতিদুষ্ট একজন ইয়োরোপীয়ান ওয়ার্ডার যার বিরুদ্ধে কয়েদীদের মারপিটের, কয়েদীদের পাউরুটী লওয়ার ও চাউল চুরির অভিযোগ Seperintendentএর নিকট বিচারাধীন ছিল তাদের সঙ্গে নিয়ে ৯নং ওয়ার্ডের Division III কয়েদীদের সায়েস্তা করতে অগ্রসর হলেন। রাস্তায় দেখা হল শ্রীযুক্ত সতীশ চন্দ্র দাসগুপ্তের সঙ্গে। তিনি Division I, শেষ রাত্রে গরু দুইতে ডেয়ারীতে গিয়েছিলেন, এখন ফিরছিলেন। তাঁকে দেখেই Jailor হুঙ্কার ছেড়ে বল্‌লে "Your men are refusing to be counted. I am going to them."

সতীশ বাবু তাঁর ওয়ার্ডে হাতের লণ্ঠনটী রেখে, কিছু গোলযোগ আসন্ন বুঝে Jailorএর অনুধাবন করলেন।

এই অল্প সময়ের মধ্যে জেলার ৯নং ওয়ার্ডের নীচের তলার তালা খুলে তাঁর দলবল নিয়ে ঢুকে পড়ে ডাহিনে বামে শায়িত নিদ্রিত বন্দীদের উপর যারা দোতলায় কি ঘটেছে তার বিন্দু বিসর্গ অবগত ছিল না, তাদের উপর কোন রকম সতর্ক না করে, সবুট লাথি ও লাঠি চালাতে আরম্ভ করলেন। (Shame, shame.) রতনমণি চট্টোপাধ্যায় ঘুম থেকে উঠে কেবল নিজের সিটে দাঁড়িয়েছেন এমন সময় এই কাণ্ড আরম্ভ হয়। তিনি হতভম্ব হয়ে জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন "What's the matter?" উত্তরে ইয়োরোপীয়ান ওয়ার্ডারের এক লাথিতে তিনি ধরাশায়ী হলেন। তিনি দাঁড়াতে গেলে Jailor তাঁকে মাটিতে চেপে ধরে রইল এবং পুনঃ পুনঃ তাঁর উপর সবুট লাথি চলল। এই সময় সতীশ বাবু দৌড়ে এসে তাঁকে অর্দ্ধচৈতন্য অবস্থায় কাপড়ের পুঁটলীর মত জড়িয়ে ধরে কোলে করে তুললেন। রতনমনি বাবুর বেরি বেরি হওয়ায় হার্ট অত্যন্ত দুর্ব্বল ছিল, সেখানে একটী লাথি লাগলে তাঁর জীবনান্ত হত।

Jailor বুঝলেন মারপিটটা নিতান্ত অকারণে হয়েছে, কারণ গুণতিতে কেউ কখনও আপত্তি করেন নি। নীচের লোকেরা ত উপরে কি ঘটেছে তাও জানত না। কিন্তু এজন্য কিছুমাত্র দুঃখ প্রকাশ করলেন না। এই ঘটনায় আলিপুর জেলের ৪ শত রাজনৈতিক বন্দীদের সকলেই দুঃখিত হলেন। তাঁরা Superintendentএর সাথে সাক্ষাৎ প্রার্থনা করলেন। প্রথম Jailor তাঁকে খবর দিতে ইচ্ছুক হলেন না। পরে বন্দীরা যখন নাছোড়বান্দা তখন কোন রকমে এসে বল্লেন "Superintendent বলছেন এমন কি urgent ব্যাপার? আজ রবিবার, আজ তিনি আসতে পারবেন না। পরে দেখা হবে।"

বন্দীরা তখন সকলে বল্লেন যে, যতক্ষণ Superintendent না আসবেন ততক্ষণ তাঁরা আহার করবেন না। বন্দীরা জানতেন এতে তাঁদের সশ্রম কারাদণ্ড হতে পারে। কেন না খাব না বলাটা জেল কোডে গুরুতর অপরাধ। না খাওয়ার জন্য অনেকের ১ বৎসর ১৷৷০ বৎসর সশ্রম কারাদণ্ড হয়েছে, এ দৃষ্টান্তের অভাব নাই। যাই হ'ক বন্দীরা Superintendentএর সঙ্গে দেখা করার জন্য এ risk নিতে বাধ্য হলেন। Superintendent এলেন অবশেষে। প্রথমটা তিনি Jailorএর পক্ষে একটু ওকালতি করে বল্লেন হয় ত force use করার প্রয়োজন ছিল। Jailor যে নিজ হাতে আইন নিতে পারেন না এটা পর্য্যন্ত তাঁর জানা ছিল না। Jail Code তিনি কোন দিন পড়েন নি পর্য্যন্ত। যখন আইনগুলি তাঁকে খুলে দেখান হল তখন তিনি একটু মুস্কিলে পড়লেন। বিচার করবেন বলে আশ্বাস দিলেন। দিন যায়, কিন্তু বিচার আর হয় না। অতঃপর জেল পরিদর্শন করার সময় Additional District Magistrateএর কানে ব্যাপারটা গেল। গত্যন্তর না দেখে তাঁর তাড়াতাড়ি ক্ষমা চেয়ে ব্যাপারটা ধামাচাপা দেওয়া হল। গান্ধিপন্থী কর্ম্মীরা অত্যন্ত ক্ষমাশীল, ক্ষমা না চাইতেই তাঁরা প্রায় ক্ষমা করে থাকেন। কিন্তু এই ঘটনাগুলি থেকে বোঝা যাবে জেলখানায় আজও কি অরাজকতাই না চলছে। আগেকার দিনে, I. M. S. officersএর দিনে, যেটুকু শৃঙ্খলা ছিল, তাও আজ লোপ পেয়েছে।

পৃথিবীর সমস্ত দেশে আজ জেলখানাগুলি সংশোধনাগারে পরিণত করার আয়োজন হয়েছে। বাস্তবিকই মানুষ ভাল কি মন্দ তা অনেকটা সুযোগ ও সামাজিক ব্যবস্থার উপর নির্ভর করে। ভাল সুযোগ পেলে মানুষ ভাল হয়, মন্দ সুযোগে পেলে মন্দ হয়। মন্দকে ভালবেসে, তার অবস্থা ভাল হবার অনুকূল করে দিয়েই, তাকে ভাল করা যায়। কেবল অত্যাচার করে, সাজা দিয়ে, কাউকে ভাল করা যায় না। তাই জেলখানাগুলিকে পৃথিবীর সভ্যদেশে সংশোধনাগারে পরিণত করার চেষ্টা। কিন্তু এই হতভাগ্য পরাধীন দেশে জেলখানাগুলিকে সাজার স্থান বলে ধরে নেওয়া হয়েছে। জেলের শাসন বিভাগ ও ডাক্তারী বিভাগ হতভাগ্য কয়েদীদের সাজা দেবার ব্যাপারে পরস্পর পাল্লা দেয়। অসহায় কয়েদীরা যখন মুমূর্ষু তখনও একটু মমতা, একটু যত্ন তারা পায় না। হাঁসপাতাল বিভাগের অবজ্ঞা, অবহেলা, সীমাহীন নিষ্ঠুরতা, আত্মীয়-বিয়োগ ব্যথায় ভরা হতভাগা কয়েদীদের মৃত্যুর দিকে ঠেলে দেয়। এই সেদিন আলিপুর সেণ্ট্রাল জেলে মদন গোপাল যোশী কিভাবে মারা গেলেন শুনুন।

প্রেসিডেন্সী সেণ্ট্রাল জেল ও আলিপুর সেণ্ট্রাল জেলে এখন আর কোন I.M.S. officer নেই। উভয় জেলের জন্য একজন Medical Officer আছেন। বহু সহস্র বন্দীর স্বাস্থ্যের জিম্মাদার ইনি। ভদ্রলোকের যা মেজাজ তাতে তাঁকে অবিলম্বে লড়াইএ, নিদেন পক্ষে পুলিশ বিভাগে পাঠান উচিত। শ্রীযুক্ত প্রবোধ চন্দ্র একজন brilliant Graduate Security Prisoner আলিপুরে আমাদের সঙ্গে ছিলেন। তিনি তাঁর অসুখের কথা Medical Officerএর কাছে নিবেদন করতে গেলে এই সবজান্তা officerটী রুগী কথা বলবে কেন বলে চটে যান, এবং শ্রীযুক্ত প্রবোধ চন্দ্রকে ধমক দিয়ে বলেন "About turn, face the wall and then talk." শ্রীযুক্ত প্রবোধ চন্দ্র একথা জেল পরিদর্শক শ্রদ্ধেয় N. K. Basuর নিকট নিবেদন করেন এবং শ্রদ্ধেয় বসু মহাশয়ও যথারীতি সে কথা উপরে লেখেন। জানি না মন্ত্রী মহাশয় তা পড়েছেন কি না? হয়ত যা চিরদিন হয় এখনো তাই হচ্ছে এবং বসু মহাশয়ের মন্তব্য বস্তাপচা হয়ে পড়ে আছে।

যাই হক বিশিষ্ট কংগ্রেস কর্ম্মী মদনগোপাল যোশী B.A., L.L.B. এবার security বন্দী হিসাবে আলিপুর জেলে থাকাকালীন অসুস্থ হলেন এবং এই Medical Officerএর অধীনে চিকিৎসিত হতে থাকলেন। দুর্দ্দশার তাঁর সীমা থাকল না। তাঁর অসুখটা পর্য্যন্ত Medical Officer কোন দিন ভাল করে পরীক্ষা করে দেখলেন না। তিনি যত বলেন তাঁর হার্টের অসুখ, খুব সেখানে ব্যথা, কে তাঁর কথা শুনে? তিনি বারবার দাবী করতে লাগলেন তাঁকে Medical Collegeএ বা অন্য কোন উপযুক্ত হাসপাতালে proper diagnosis ও treatment-এর জন্য পাঠান হ'ক, কিন্তু সে কথায় কেউ কর্ণপাত পর্য্যন্ত করলেন না। চিকিৎসা চ'লল তাঁর আন্দাজে। কখন সাব্যস্ত হ'ল প্লুরিসি, কখন অন্য কিছু। তিনি বললেন আমার lungsএ কিছু নেই, heartএর অসুখ, cardiogram করান হ'ক। Medical Officer বল্লেন, "না X-ray করাতে হবে।" যাই হক, অবশেষে তাঁর অসুখ চরমে উঠল। তখন উপায়ান্তর না দেখে তাঁকে immediately Medical Collegeএর indoorএ পাঠাবার জন্য Medibal Officer জেল Superintendentকে জানালেন। সকাল ১১টায় তিনি Superintendentকে একথা জানালেন। তিনি আবার এমন বিধান যে মদনগোপাল যোশীকে indoorএ পাঠাবার ব্যবস্থা না করে outdoorএ পাঠাবার ব্যবস্থা করলেন। বৈকাল ৪টার সময় শ্রীযুক্ত যোশীকে Medical Collegeএর outdoorএ নিয়ে যাবার জন্য জেল গেটে একখানি taxi এল, কোন ambulance এল না। Taxi গাড়ীকে ambulance গাড়ীর মত জেল গেটের ভিতর যেতে দেওয়া হল না। Superintendentকে ফোন করা হল। তিনি নিজ বাড়ীতে ছিলেন। জানালেন, "তাই ত এ ত ambulance গাড়ী নয়, এ ত taxi, জেল গেটের ভিতর হাসপাতালের কাছে যায় কি করে? তাতে যে আইন ভাঙ্গা হবে।" যে বেচারীকে out-doorএ পাঠাবার ব্যবস্থার জন্য এত জল্পনা হচ্ছে তখন stretcher করে জেল গেটে আসার ক্ষমতা পর্য্যন্ত তাঁর নেই। Taxi ফিরে গেল। ঐ রাত্রিতেই আন্দাজ ৩টার সময় শ্রীযুক্ত মদনগোপাল যোশী স্ত্রী, পুত্র, কন্যার নিকট হতে বহুদূরে একান্ত অবজ্ঞা ও অবহেলার মধ্যে জেল হাসপাতালে heart fail করে মারা গেলেন। ধন্য I.B.র চিঠি censorএর ব্যবস্থা। সিকিউরিটি বন্দীরা সপ্তাহে ৪ খানি চিঠি লিখতে পারেন, কিন্তু সম্প্রতি একটু তাড়া-তাড়ি হলেও তখন কোন চিঠিই ২ মাস ২॥ মাসের পূর্ব্বে গন্তব্যস্থলে পেঁছাত না। শ্রীযুক্ত যোশী ২ মাস শ্বাস অসুখে ভুগেছিলেন, কিন্তু তাঁর অসুখের সংবাদটী পর্য্যন্ত তাঁর স্ত্রী, পুত্র, কন্যার নিকট পেঁছায় নাই কোন দিন। যেদিন প্রাতে তাঁরা শুনলেন সুস্থ সবল যোশী ইহধামে আর নেই, জেলখানার হাসপাতালে শেষ নিঃশ্বাস ফেলেছেন, সে দিন কি মর্ম্মান্তিক আঘাত তাঁরা পেয়েছিলেন ভেবে দেখুন—They got the shock of their life.

Security Prisonerদের সম্বন্ধেই যখন এই, তখন ordinary convictদের কি দুর্দ্দশা তা আর বলতে হবে না। তাদের সম্বন্ধে ডাক্তারী বিভাগের কোন দায়িত্বজ্ঞানের পরিচয় কোন দিন পাওয়া যায় না। অবজ্ঞায়, অবহেলায় কুকুর শেয়ালের মত তারা মরে। ডাক্তারী বিভাগ কতখানি এদের সম্বন্ধে দায়িত্বজ্ঞানহীন তা একটা ছোট দৃষ্টান্ত দিলেই বুঝবেন। শ্রীযুক্ত বীরেশ্বর বসু তখন জেল হাসপাতালের T. B, Wardএ, তাঁর কাছে জানলেই বোধ করি একথা জানা যাবে। একজন ordinary convictকে T. B. Wardএ পাঠান হল। T. B. Wardএ তখন অনেক Galloping Phthisis case. কিছুদিন পরে বলা হল, ordinary convictটির T. B. হয়নি। অতএব তার আর ওখানে থেকে দরকার নেই এবং তাকে সাধারণ কয়েদীদের ফাইলে পাঠিয়ে দেওয়া হল। তখনও তার গলা দিয়ে রক্ত পড়ত শুনেছি। এখন জিজ্ঞাস্য এই—যদি

লোকটার T. B. না হয়ে থাকে তবে কেন তাকে T. B. Wardএ রাখা হয়েছিল? আর যদি T. B. হয়েই থাকে তবে সাধারণ কয়েদীদের মধ্যে কেনই বা আবার তাকে রাখা হল? কত অত্যাচার, কত অনাচার সাধারণ কয়েদীদের উপর হয় কে তার খোঁজ রাখে, কে তার কৈফিয়ৎ তলব করে? পশুর থেকেও নিকৃষ্ট বলে তাদের জ্ঞান করা হয়।

একটা ঘটনা শুনুন। আমরা ছিলাম সিকিউরিটি বন্দী। আমাদের রান্না এবং পরিচর্য্যার কাজ করত কতকগুলি সাধারণ কয়েদী। আমাদের বৈকালের রান্না সেরে এদের নিজেদের wardএ lock up হতে যেতে একটু দেরী হত। এর জন্য এদের special permission ছিল। কিন্তু একবার lock up খুলে পুনরায় যে এদের lock up করতে হয় এই কাজটা warderদের বড় বিরক্তিকর ছিল। তারা অকারণে না, বোন, চৌদ্দ পুরুষ তুলে এদের প্রতিদিন lock upএর সময় গালাগালি করত, কখন কখন মারধর পর্য্যন্ত করত। অথচ এ বেচারীরা করবেই বা কি, আমাদের রান্না না সেরে চলে গেলেও ত সাজা পাবে। আমরা বারবার Jailor বা Head Warderকে বললাম, special permission থাকা সত্ত্বেও এদের উপর এ জুলুম হচ্ছে কেন? তাতে একদিন প্রতিকার হয় ত পরের দিন যে কে সেই। তখন আমরা Supeirntendentকে লিখিত complain করলাম। ফলে মারধর বন্ধ হল, কিন্তু গালাগালি বন্ধ হল না। কয়েদীদের আস্পর্দ্ধা হয়েছে বলে আরও জোরে চলল। এ ছাড়া আর এক উৎপাৎ আরম্ভ হল যার নাম punitive search. কয়েদীদের যখন ইচ্ছা তল্লাসী নেওয়া যায়। ওদের ভাতের মধ্যে তখন বেটন দিয়ে খোঁচে দেখা হতে লাগল contraband আছে কি না। কখন কখন সবুট পা দিয়ে ভাতের থালা ঠেলে পর্য্যন্ত দেওয়া হত। তাদের উপর বেশী জুলুম হত যারা আমাদের কাছে তাদের লাঞ্ছনার কথা ব্যক্ত করত। আমরাও ত কয়েদী, যদি Jailor, জমাদার এদের রক্ষা না করে তাহলে আমরাই কি এদের সব সময় রক্ষা করতে পারি।

সাধারণ কয়েদীদের প্রতি পশুর অধম ব্যবহার করা হয়। যে ঘরে থাকার কথা ৩০ জন সেখানে পোরা হয় ২৫০ জন। রাত্রে পেচ্ছাবের টব ভরতি হয়ে উপচে পড়ে। খালি পায় তার উপর দিয়ে চলাফেরা করে সব একাকার হয়। দুইখানি করে কম্বল দেওয়ার কথা, এখন একখানি করেও জুটে না। জাঙ্গিয়া ও কুর্ত্তাও বরাদ্দমত তারা পায় না। অতি নোংরা শতছিন্ন পুরাতন জাঙ্গিয়াই অধিকাংশের পরনে। যারা হাজতি তারা ত কিছুই পায় না। অনেকের পরনে মাত্র একখানি গামছা সম্বল। মাসের পর মাস ঐ একখানি গামছা পরেই তারা কাটায়। ঐ ছিদ্রময় গামছায় লজ্জা নিবারণ হয় না। হাজতিদের কাপড় না থাকলে দেবার কথা আছে, তা দণ্ডিত লোকেরাই বরাদ্দমত জিনিস পায় না, তা আবার হাজতিরা। প্রত্যেকের একটী থাবার থালা ও একটী বাটী পাবার কথা। ঐ বাটীতে জল খেতে হবে, পায়খানার জল নিতে হবে, চান করতে হবে, সব কিছু। কিছু দিন হল দু'টার বদলে একটী দেওয়া হত, হয় বাটী, নয় থালা। এখন একটীও দেওয়া হয় না। একদল খেলে সেই থালা বা বাটী ধুয়ে ফেলে আর এক দল খেতে বসে। পায়খানা, চান ইত্যাদির কথা উঠেই না। পার কর, না পার না কর। তারপর যে খাবার দেওয়া হয় তার কথা না বলাই ভাল। এক কথায় তা মানুষের অখাদ্য। খাবার বরাদ্দ এমনি খুব কম, তাও বহু হাত চুরি হয়ে কয়েদীদের কাছে যে অবস্থায় পৌঁছায় তা চোখে না দেখলে বিশ্বাস করা যায় না। অসহায় কয়েদী জেলের পাঁচিলের মধ্যে। Public opinion বলে কোন কিছু সেখানে নেই। লাথি, কিল, চড়, অবমাননা, লাঞ্ছনা, দুর্ব্ব্যবহার যেন তাদের অবশ্য প্রাপ্য। সাজা পেতে তাদের জেলে পাঠান

হয়েছে। জেলের শাসন বিভাগ ও ডাক্তারী বিভাগ এই জন্যইত আছে। অতএব অবাধে এ ব্যাপারে তাঁরা পরস্পর পাল্লা দিচ্ছেন। অসহায় মানুষের চোখের জল, নির্য্যাতনে, অপমানে, আত্মীয় বিয়োগ ব্যথায় কারাস্তরালে ঝরে পড়ে, কেউ তার খোঁজ রাখে না। পৃথিবীর নরককুণ্ড বাংলার এই জেলখানা। সভ্যতার সর্ব্বনিকৃষ্ট কলঙ্ক।

জেলের কর্ম্মচারিগণ যত চুরি করেন, পেটের দায়ে যারা চুরি করে তারা অত করে না। আমি এক এক সময় ভাবি যদি সমাজকে চোর ডাকাতের হাত থেকে বাঁচানই জেলখানা সৃষ্টির উদ্দেশ্য হয় তবে এই জেল কর্ম্মচারীদের সর্ব্বাগ্রে জেলখানায় পোরা হয় না কেন? এদের সাহস এত বেড়ে গিয়েছে যে, সাধারণ কয়েদীত দূরের কথা security prisonerদের জিনিস পর্য্যন্ত এরা অবাধে চুরি করেন। আলীপুর জেলের Head Clerk হাতেনাতে মাখন চুরির ব্যাপারে ধরা পড়লেন। দিতেন আমাদের এক ওজন, লিখতেন খাতায় আর এক ওজন। চুরি, falsification of accounts, উভয় চার্য্যেই তাঁর সাজা হওয়া উচিত ছিল। তাঁকে আদালতে prosecute করার জন্য আমরা Superintendentকে অনুরোধ করলাম। তিনি Head Clerkকে দিয়ে ক্ষমা চাইয়ে বিষয়টা ধামাচাপা দিলেন। আলীপুর জেলে এই চুরির ব্যাপারটার এত বাড়াবাড়ি হয়েছে যে বলবার নয়। কনট্রাক্টারদের সঙ্গে যোগে জেল কর্ম্মচারিগণ অবাধে চুরি করেন। এক টাকা যার দাম তার দাম যেন পাঁচ টাকা। গভর্ণমেণ্টের control price পর্য্যন্ত তারা মানেন না। বাইরে একজন control priceএর চাইতে চিনি বা মসলার দাম বেশী নিলে তার জেল হবে। কিন্তু সরকারী জেলখানায় পরমানন্দে Additional Jailor কনট্রাক্টারের সহযোগিতায় এ কাজ করবেন, তাঁর পদোন্নতি ছাড়া অন্য কিছুই হবে না। আলীপুর জেলে আমি Kitchen Committeeর Chairman ছিলাম। আমার নিজের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে বলছি, শুনুন। Control price যখন চিনির ছয় আনা তিন পয়সা করে সের তখন তার জন্য আমাদের দিতে হত চৌদ্দ আনা করে। মসলার control price যখন আট আনা করে তখন তার জন্য আমাদের দিতে হত এক টাকা চার আনা করে। কোন ভয় ভাবনা না রেখে সরকারী খাতায় Additional Jailor এই দাম enter করতেন। বহু বলার পরও যখন এরা শুনলেন না তখন আমরা আলীপুরের ডিষ্ট্রীক্ট ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটের কাছে এদের prosecute করার জন্য formal complain পাঠালাম। কিন্তু জেলের কর্ম্মচারিগণ তা ডিষ্ট্রীক্ট ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটের কাছে না পাঠিয়ে পাঠালেন I. G.র কাছে। সেখানে এখনও সে দরখাস্ত বস্তাপচা হয়ে আছে। অন্ততঃ এখন পর্য্যন্ত এ বিষয়ের কোন প্রতিকার হয় নি।

মন্ত্রিগণ মন্ত্রী হবার কালে অনেক আশ্বাস দিয়েছিলেন। তার একটীও ত পালিত হচ্ছে না। বন্দী-মুক্তি নীতি ত দেখলাম। যে রকম গুণে গুণে ছাড়া হচ্ছে তাতে ত অদূর ভবিষ্যতে যে সবাই ছাড়া পাবে এ একান্ত দুরাশা। জেলখানার কয়েদীদের সুখ সুবিধার দিক থেকে যদি তাঁরা কিছু করতেন। কেবল রাজনৈতিক বন্দীদের কথাই বলতে চাই নে, হতভাগ্য সাধারণ কয়েদীদের কথাও নিবেদন করছি। কিন্তু এ সম্বন্ধে দেখছি সব মন্ত্রী দলই সমান। মন্ত্রী আসে, মন্ত্রী যায়, কয়েদীদের দুঃখ যেমন তেমনি রয়।

সাধ করে কংগ্রেস বলে এ system না বদলালে, এ শাসন পদ্ধতি না ভাঙ্গলে, কিছুই হবে না।

Security prisonerদের সুখ-সুবিধার ব্যবস্থার অনেক ফর্দ্দ দেওয়া হয়। কিন্তু আসল ব্যাপার যে কি হয় তা security prisoner না হলে বুঝবেন না। প্রথম এক instalment জিনিস পেতেই প্রায় ৬ মাসের ধাক্কা। অজুহাতের অভাব নেই। সাধারণ কাপড় চোপড়

পর্য্যন্ত বন্দীরা মাসের পর মাস পায় না। আমায় লোহার খাট্ দেওয়া হল। বড় বড় জাল কম্বল পেতে তার উপর শোয়া যায় না। দ্বিতীয় দিনে Jailor নিজে থেকেই বললেন "Oh, you were in much difficulty. How could you manage to lie on that iron cot with wide gratings without a mattress. This evening I will send you one mattress." এই mattress পেতে আমার একটী মাসের উপর লাগে। এতদিন সমানে খাটে শোয়ার এই প্রহসন চলতে থাকে। Hair oil, tooth paste ইত্যাদি সময় মত দেওয়া হবে না, পরে বলা হবে পিছনে তারিখেরটা আর পাওয়া যাবে না, lapse হয়ে গিয়েছে।

আজ দারুণ খাদ্য-সমস্যার দিনে সকলে একযোগে কাজ করা উচিত। রাজবন্দীদের সকলকে মুক্তি দেওয়া উচিত। দীর্ঘ দিনের রাজবন্দী, যাঁদের, বৃটিশ বেওনেটের আঁতারতলায় দাঁড়িয়ে একদা মন্ত্রীদল দস্যু, তস্কর বলে সম্বোধন করেছিলেন, তাঁদেরও মুক্তি দেওয়া উচিত। এঁরা দেশের সুসন্তান—এঁরা স্বাধীনতার জন্য জীবনের সব কিছু উৎসর্গ করেন। আমরাই দস্যু, তস্কর, কারণ আমরা গরীবের রক্ত নিংড়ান মোটা মাহিনা গ্রহণ করি আর প্রভুদের মন যোগাতে দেশের বিরুদ্ধাচরণ করি।

স্যার নাজিমুদ্দিনকে আমি দূরদর্শী লোক বলেই জানি। আমার আর সময় নেই। তাই তাঁকে আমার শেষ অনুরোধ এই জানাব যে তিনি সমস্ত রাজনৈতিক বন্দীদের এ দেশের এই মহা-সঙ্কট সময়ে মুক্তি দিন এবং কারাগারগুলিকে মানুষের বাসের যোগ্য করে তুলুন। এ যদি তিনি না পারেন বা না করার জন্য ছেঁদো কথার সৃষ্টি করেন তবে বলব ভাঁওতায় আর দরকার নেই—A tyrant is never in want of a plea.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Das, I think that it would be better if you simply say "I move the motion that stands in my name".

Babu RADHA NATH DAS: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: There are four motions standing in your name Which are you going to move?

Babu RADHA NATH DAS: I shall move all my motions together and make one speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not read the motions. They will be taken as read.

Babu RADHA NATH DAS: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

I move this motion to raise a discussion about the neglect of duty on the part of the Government so far as enquiring and looking after the proper management and administration of the Alipore Central Jail regarding the following matters:—

1. *General Treatment in Hospital* is very poor and miserable. (*a*) Calcium gluconate is injected in 2 c.c. doses where the doses ought to be 5 c.c. (*b*) Death takes place in hospital before it is declared to be serious so that sufficient care is not taken for the patients thus died. (*c*) Cases, not properly diagnosed, are

not sent to the Medical College Hospital or any other hospital for better diagnosis and better treatment and as a result many prisoners die before their diseases are properly diagnosed early, and better treated; as for instance the case of Srijut Madan Mohan Joshi and many other may be cited. (*d*) Quinine was not available for a month or so. (*e*) In spite of recurring blood spitting, one Haidar Ali, a division III prisoner, is treated with palliative treatment and no step was taken for him for the proper diagnosis and better treatment by an expert. (*f*) Patients are treated like prisoners and not as patients. (*g*) No up to date method of treatment is adopted in the hospital and patients are treated in the old line of treatment, such as, tubercular patients are not treated by the modern artificial Pneumothorax and modern diathermy treatment.

2. *Accommodation in the Jail Hospital*—

(1) The present capacity of the jail hospital is 100 when the number of patients goes up to 250.

(2) And with the increase of jail population at the present time, there has been no necessary increase in the expenditure in medicine and medical diet.

(3) It is seen in many cases that the same patients are admitted in jail hospital for fever thrice or even four times a month—thus in each time he is discharged without being cured.

(4) Patients in some cases though not fit for discharge are discharged from the hospital for making room for more serious patients.

3. Good deal of differential treatment is made in this hospital between the classified and non-classified prisoners, such as security prisoners for their diseases regarding teeth are treated by expert dentist but in case of other prisoners, though their sufferings may be greater, such treatment is not available for them; again when calcium therapy is required the division III prisoners generally get calcium chloride injection which is the cheapest, whereas in case of classified prisoners they generally get calcium gluconate and never calcium chloride.

Almost all of these maladministrations in jail hospital are applicable to the Hooghly District Jail and other jails of Bengal.

4. No proper steps and precautions were taken in the Alipore Central Jail during the last air raids in Calcutta. The lights were kept lit several nights though the prisoners repeatedly asked the jail authorities to put them out. And during times of actual raids arrangements should be made for bringing down the prisoners from the upper stories to the ground floors or they should be altogether removed from Calcutta specially in those cases who want to be removed to safer zones.

I also beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion to raise a discussion about the Government's policy and method of management and administration of jails of Bengal and the Government should adopt the following measures:—

1. That the jails should be managed in accordance with the improved and advanced rules and methods with which the jails of Europe and the United States of America are managed.
2. That the conditions under which the division III prisoners live in jails are utterly hopeless and disastrous, painful and ruinous. By the manner and conditions under which they are made to live, it is to be admitted that the Government does not want to consider them as human beings but beasts.
3. That the jails should be considered not so much as a place for punishing the prisoners but reforming them as much as possible, by way of imparting education and technical training in some sort of vocational education.
4. (*i*) That they should be given better food. (*ii*) They should get more interviews with their relatives and the method of having and holding interviews should be improved. And in this matter of interview the case of long term prisoners should be specially considered. (*iii*) More letters should be allowed to them to write and receive. (*iv*) They should be allowed to read and write more than they now get. (*v*) And the medical treatment of division III prisoners is very miserable and that should be improved and all the division III patient prisoners together with the other division prisoners should be equally treated by the jail hospital authorities and there should be no differential treatment with regard to any classified and non-classified prisoners.

I further beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion to raise a discussion about the Government's policy so far as the political prisoners are concerned with regard to their classification.

Political prisoners should be treated all alike, and there should be no classification. They should be made into one class identical with the Class I prisoners as existing in the Jail Code now. In this connection it may be noted that in Madras the political prisoners are recognised as one distinct class, styled "The Star Class" and given a dress with a star mark on to wear.

Further I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion to raise a discussion about the Government's policy of appointing candidates for filling up the post of jailorship in all Central Jails in Bengal—

1. That Government appoints European or Anglo-Indian Warders in place of senior-most Deputy Jailors in the post of Jailorship in the Central Jails of Bengal.

2. That the Government's policy should be to appoint the senior-most Deputy Jailors in such vacancies and not the European or Anglo-Indian Warders who are far below the rank of senior-most Deputy Jailor and more and above that (i) those warders are illiterate and uneducated, (ii) have no knowledge of administration; (iii) do not understand vernacular language which is essential in such jobs and above that; and (iv) they do not know how to behave with gentlemen.

Lastly, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion to raise a discussion about the policy of the Government regarding giving allowance to the security prisoners of Bengal.

First of all, Sir, the jails should be considered as a place for reforming the criminals and not a place for mainly punishing them for crimes and criminal activities. And for the purpose of doing that and bringing home that cherished object the prisoners must be imparted with academic as well as vocational education so that the criminals may come out of jails as so many good and peaceful citizens by passing their days with a good living. They must be given better food, more scope and chances to read and write. They must be allowed to have more interviews with their relatives and they should be allowed to receive and write more letters. In this matter the case of long term prisoners should be more carefully and specially considered. This should be allowed only for the purpose of making them not to forget that they are social beings. Why? Because in jails, quite shut out from the society, they, the prisoners, are prone to become more unsocial. The more they become unsocial, the more they will turn out to be dangerous to society and worst type of citizens. So, my request to the Hon'ble Minister in charge is that he should minutely note down this suggestion of mine, though I know that he is not at all quite so negligent about this matter.

As regards the medical treatment in jail hospitals, I like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that in jail hospitals the prisoners are looked not as patients but so many prisoners. Specially the case of Division III prisoners in jails is most pathetic and painful. They are not properly treated and practically no care is taken of their diseases, however serious and difficult they may be. So my suggestion is that in jail hospitals there should be no differential treatment so far as the classified and non-classified prisoners are concerned.

In the Hooghly District Jail, Sir, what happens every day is the stealing of food materials from the ration of the prisoners. These acts of stealing are committed by no less a person than the Jail Hospital doctor and the Deputy Jailor. The doctor even goes so far as to steal the medical diet of the patients of the hospital. In the Alipore Central Jail I have seen that butter was being stolen every day, when I was there, by the head clerk of that jail.

And, I think, Sir my friend Mr. Haripada Chatterjee, a member of this House, has already mentioned that fact in the course of his speech today. Thieves are being sent to jail for the offence of committing theft but these jail officials go unpunished though they commit theft and that even within the jail precints.

The treatment meted out to the patients in the Alipore Central Jail and the Hooghly District Jail hospitals is so bad that it knows no bounds. Patients in those two hospitals and also in other hospitals of the province are not properly treated and their diseases are not carefully and properly diagnosed. Due to the utter and sheer carelessness and negligence on the part of medical officer and the Superintendent of the Alipore Central Jail our most esteemed friend Mr. Madan Gopal Joshi died before he was properly treated and his disease diagnosed. One very significant malpractice that is very often noticed and which is rampant in jail hospitals is that the patients are not sent to good hospitals for their better treatment and better and more accurate diagnosis of their diseases. And so as a consequence most of the patients who die meet with their death before their actual and proper medical treatment.

Another most outrageous act that was committed in the Alipore Central Jail is that during the times of the last air raids in Calcutta, the lights of that jail were kept lit though the prisoners repeatedly asked to put out those lights. This fact was brought to the notice of the Superintendent of the Alipore Central Jail and though he said that in no future time this thing will happen and though he assured us that the lights must not be kept lit at night during times of raids, still on two more occasions the lights were not put out during times of air raids. This gross negligence and dereliction of duty on the part of the same European warder on all those occasions, who was in charge of those lights, might have caused some loss of lives and grievous injury to the prisoners both ordinary and political in the Alipore Central Jail.

Another point, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government to, is the filling up of vacancies in the posts of jailors in Central Jails of Bengal. The most common malpractice in such appointments is that those posts are being filled up by European or Anglo-Indian warders instead of by senior-most deputy jailors who are in most cases Indians. This favouritism and nepotism on the part of the Government should not be tolerated now. And I hope that Sir Nazimuddin being himself a man of this land will not tolerate this sort of favouritism in case of European warders so far as their appointments to the posts of jailors in Central Jails of Bengal are concerned. Those European warders are far below the rank of senior deputy jailors and not only that, they are very illiterate and uneducated and do not know the vernacular language and are quite ignorant about the jail administration, and lastly but not the least, they do not know how to deal and behave with gentlemen. So I request, Sir, that the Government should not in such cases appoint those European warders by superseding the cases of the senior-most deputy jailors.

Another thing which is a most important matter is that the system of classifying the political prisoners should be stopped altogether. There should not be made any attempt to divide the political prisoners amongst themselves. This classification, on the one hand, is not so meticulously done but on the contrary done very haphazardly. This matter has been voiced times without number both on the floor of this House and the public platform and in the Press, but Government has, as before, always turned a deaf ear to this matter. In Madras the political prisoners are all classed together and there is no such separate classification for them. So far as my information goes, that is the fact.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit but was given one minute more to finish his speech.)

They are made into a distinct class recognised as the "Star Class" and they are made to put on a star mark on their dresses. So I ask the Government that in Bengal too this sort of one distinct class should be made for the political prisoners and they should be ruled and governed strictly in accordance with those rules of the Jail Code governing the Division I prisoners.

Lastly, Sir, I want to draw the attention of the Government to one most urgent matter and which every man of this land is eager to have it done by the Government, and that is allowing proper and adequate allowance to the security prisoners. In most cases the Government by detaining those security prisoners, and in those cases mostly where those security prisoners are the only earning members of their respective families, has done a very great injustice by depriving those families of maintenance and livelihood. And though I know that some of the Ministers from amongst the persent Ministry are trying their level best to maintain those families and to save them from poverty, destitution and starvation, by allowing adequate and proper allowance to the families of those security prisoners, still I should bring home to the present Ministry that the pace of giving allowance to them should be more expedited.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Mr. Speaker Sir, times without number acts of inefficiency and maladministration by the Jail Department have been brought before this House with little or no effect. I do not want to dilate upon this subject as my friend Mr. Chatterjee has spoken elaborately on it. I endorse every single word that fell from his mouth. He did not exaggerate but told what is truth. The only thing that I regretfully want to point out is that the Hon'ble Ministers could not make time to visit any of the important jails where these prisoners have been lodged even after these sorts of serious complaints were brought to their notice.

Sir, there has been another white elephant added to the staff—one Mr. Hicks has been appointed Deputy Inspector-General for the Security Branch. I have not seen his activities except on one occasion. After the serious assault that took place in the Presidency Jail in the month of April he was found there inside the jail and he was busy in securing discharge of seriously injured security prisoners from the jail hospital and

the Medical College Hospital lest they might be detained for more than 21 days and cases of grievous hurt made out. This is all that Mr. Hicks did during his incumbency as Deputy Inspector-General for Security Prisoners.

As regards the activities of the Jail Department it will be enough if I say that there is no difference between the criminals and the jail staff who exercise control over them. The only difference is that the crimes of these ordinary criminals were detected and accounted for and they were tried and punished while the crimes committed by some of the jail officials remain undetected and untried by any competent court.

Sir, as my time is very limited I do not want to take much time, but I want to place before the Home Minister who is also the Jail Minister this fact that the jailor of the Dinajpur Jail forced an ordinary prisoner to drink urine and night-soil: the reason was the prisoner escaped from the jail custody. You all know, Sir, that there are elaborate arrangements for guarding the ordinary prisoners as well as the security prisoners in jail. It was due to the dereliction of the jail staff that this prisoner escaped but he was later on apprehended, and the jailor with the help of warders and other prisoners made him drink a mixture of night-soil and urine. This fact was brought to the notice of the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of the Jail, but no step was taken. I think, but I do not exactly remember, that this fact was also brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari Barma. I would request the Jail Minister to enquire into this matter and take every step to remedy this state of things in jails.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, when this House met for the first time in the year 1937 all that was possible by way of discussion and criticism with regard to the jail administration and jail reform was made before the House, and, Sir, one expression rings in my ears today. There was a speech by Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain on that occasion regarding the Jail budget and he said that as soon as a prisoner enters within the jail precincts the doors of civilisation are closed against him. At that time I did not know that his statement was so literally true. After the expiry of six years today in September, 1943, I am in a position to state that the rays of civilisation do not enter the jail, do not exist there, and when a prisoner, whatever his status and position may be, comes out he comes out not so much reformed in mentality as steeped in barbarism. The reason for that is that in spite of all committees which sit for enquiry, in spite of elaborate questionnaires issued which elicit valuable information by way of answer, in spite of all that the non-official opinion has tried to do by way of focussing criticisms upon this department, it is painfully true today that jail is a tail of Government which wags only departmentally and never ministerially.

Sir, one other fact which emerges out of the jail administration is that it is entirely characterised by absence of heart. The best of the jail official is an official without a heart and others are simply heartless. For example, look at the security prisoners. There is no denying the fact that

the cream of the society contributes the security prisoners to the jail. They are men of education, men of culture, men of very reasonable and refined aspirations. They require something by way of cultural recreation at least. Our European friends to the left do not forget their saying that men do not live by bread alone, but it is only grudgingly that bread is given in jail and nothing more is given. So far as books are concerned, repeated attention drawn to Ministers, to the departmental heads, to the jail administrators, all this ends in futility. Not only books are not supplied by Government or through the efforts of Government but books which are supplied by private friends and agencies remain lying at the jail office for weeks, fortnights and months. They wait to be censored and censored and they never reach the prisoners' hands in time and sometimes never at all.

Sir, my friend Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu said that he was not aware of the activities of Mr. Hicks, the Deputy Inspector-General, for the Security Prisoners. Personally I am aware of his activities at least for once. He came to see the security prisoners in Berhampore Jail. What he did was to look up to the ceiling. He was inspecting whether there were windows and holes big enough for effecting escape on the part of the security prisoners. That is all that he wanted to go there for, and when one of the prisoners drew his attention to the insufficiency of food at that time, he said, "Well, these orderlies live very well on Rs. 22 to Rs. 25 per month". The implication is that these security prisoners are no better in status than the orderlies of the Deputy Inspector-General. This is the type of men who are particularly recruited because they are considered to be very efficient. The more heartless a man is, the more rude, the more uncultured, the more intolerable an official is, the better he will be found for administrative purpose. Sir, the matter is disgraceful, to say the least of it.

Then, Sir, I draw the attention of the Ministers to other cases of heartlessness. Letters are very precious things for prisoners who are in jail. It is no use denying that they come from families; they have got their own moorings in their families even when they are in jail. Letters come; they are kept in bundle at the jail office; the prisoners get wind of the fact that letters are there but they cannot get access to them at least before seven days have passed. Sir, these are small things for the administrators but certainly these are very big propositions so far as prisoners are concerned.

Then, Sir, there is the question of recreation. People who are accustomed to some sort of sports are denied of all sorts of amenities in that direction.

With regard to the question of classification also two of my friends have already stated and I repeat that so far as political prisoners are concerned they ought to be classified under a special head. I know Sir Nazimuddin may give a reply, as he did on several other occasions previously, that the Jail Code does not contemplate any such distinction between political prisoners and non-political prisoners, but he should not

be proud of that. The Jail Code should be modified because even according to the accepted principles of international law, for example the law relating to extradition of criminals and persons arrested, the Extradition Act recognises the distinction between a political offender and a non-political offender. On the same footing every civilised society has accepted and this Government ought to accept the distinction between a political prisoner and a non-political prisoner. Political prisoners should be classified apart and all the amenities that are allowed under the Jail Code should be extended to them.

I invite the particular attention of the Home Minister to the disgraceful administration in the hospital and to the disgraceful way in which the Home Department does not respond to the demands of the medical officers. I know that when Civil Surgeons or Assistant Surgeons in charge write to the department for the examination or treatment of a particular prisoner, these are turned down by the I.B. report and the I.B. people sit upon the medical officers and do not allow a free hand to them. The result is that sometimes the prisoners do not get any treatment at all and when they get the malady takes an extensive proportion in the meantime and sometimes it becomes incurable. I may refer to one particular instance in connection with the present Government itself. One Asok Kumar Bhatta of Berhampore came to hospital for operation of hernia. In the meantime his father, who was a medical officer, fell dangerously ill, and representations were made to the Government asking for leave so that he may see his dying father. All that could be done by non-officials was done. I know—I have the authority to state—that Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami in the absence of Sir Nazimuddin placed the entire matter before the department and Mr. Bapat gave Mr. Goswami to understand that all that could be done was done and Mr. Goswami was under the impression that he was given the opportunity to see his dying father. But as a matter of fact he was not given an opportunity to see his dying father. The father died and it was only due to the kindness of the local I.B. people that the only son was allowed to set fire to the mouth of the dead father in the hospital. Thereafter representations were made for giving him permission to perform the *sradh* ceremony at his house but that was also refused. In the year 1943 when we hear many good things, many kind words regarding the political prisoners and their families, these instances stand out as colossal mockery of the assurances that we hear from day to day. The department seems to have still the upper hand and it is no credit for the Hon'ble Minister if things go on like this. I would expect the present Ministers to take up the matter in right earnest. If they are really earnest some heart can be introduced into the administration. If matters do not improve it would certainly be due to the fact that the Ministers are not applying their hearts to this matter. If heart is applied, if earnestness is introduced, there is no reason why things cannot be improved in future.

I would urge upon the Ministers to set up a very strong committee including mostly of non-officials, not merely a committee for extending

patronage to members of the Government party but members who know more of the jail, members who are willing to assist the jail administration in a proper way, members who can give valuable suggestions and can help Government in effecting improvement in the near future should be included. In the year 1943 when civilisation has marched a lot ahead it is certainly not a matter of credit to the Ministers to hear such complaints pouring in from all sides. But I repeat that if the Ministry have got hearts they can contaminate the officials to some extent and make their hearts function. If their hearts do not function, I repeat what I have said already, namely, that it will be because the Ministers have got no hearts.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, time will not permit me to refer to the details of administration of this department. I propose, therefore, Sir, to confine myself in the first place to some of the objectionable features to which the attention of the House has already been drawn in respect of the treatment of political prisoners.

In the first place, the attention of the House has been drawn to specific instances where medical treatment has been found to be utterly inadequate. Instance after instance has been given where no medical arrangement whatsoever was provided for, and in fact there has been one instance where by telephonic arrangements with the Medical Hospital provision for a prisoner's accommodation was made in the Medical College Hospital a little while after the patient had died inside the jail. There is the case of Hirak Talukdar who has been suffering for the last four months and the latest reports received go to show that his condition is very serious, but he has not been removed to hospital yet. There have also been cases of deliberate assaults and cell punishment and I do not wish to refer to them in detail except to request the Hon'ble Home Minister that some arrangement should be made for making an enquiry into those very serious allegations. Sir, it is true that these persons suffer in silence inside the jail. There is press censoring; information does not reach the public outside and when prisoners come out of jail specific allegations are made of cases of deliberate assault, like kicking by a European warder in the presence of the jailor and so forth and of cell punishment for offences which are not included in the Jail Code itself. The Hon'ble Home Minister did not obviously issue instructions to the jail authorities to treat the prisoners in this barbaric fashion. If these allegations are made and if there are persons who are prepared to prove to the hilt that the allegations are true, an opportunity should be given to them for the sake of the reputation of the officers themselves in order to arrive at the truth.

With regard to diet allowance, it is true that the diet allowance has been increased from 12 annas to Rs. 1-8 but there is one aspect of the matter to which I would invite the special attention of the Home Minister, namely, that in June last a circular was issued by the Home Department pointing out that the supply of rice should be at controlled rate in view of the abnormal prices prevailing at that time. But actually rice has been sold to the prisoners at the rate of Rs. 30 per maund, sugar at the rate of

12 annas per seer or in other words Rs. 30 per maund whereas the controlled rate is, I believe, Rs. 18 or Rs. 19 per maund and *atta* at the rate of Rs. 32 per maund. I ask the Home Minister to explain under what canons of equity and justice the Jail officers are allowed to sell to the security prisoners or other prisoners these commodities at these fantastic rates, so that while on the one hand the allowance has been increased from 12 annas to Rs. 1-8 with regard to the security prisoners the rates at which these commodities are being supplied to them on the other hand give them no relief whatsoever. The so-called increase in diet allowance is meaningless. A petition was submitted to the Additional District Magistrate, 24-Parganas, signed by a large number of prisoners making this specific allegation that they were being compelled to purchase at much higher rates than those approved by Government. As to what has happened to the petition the Hon'ble Home Minister will be able to tell us. So far as the allowances are concerned, I believe there are 1,500 security prisoners still inside the various jails in Bengal. About 750 of them are getting allowance. I am not absolutely correct about the figure, but so far as I could collect from the various answers given by the Home Minister it appears that about 50 per cent. are receiving allowance. In many of these cases, the allowances actually sanctioned are low and about half of the security prisoners have not got any allowance at all. I would ask again the Hon'ble Home Minister that, in view of the abnormal economic distress through which the province is passing today, he should pass an *ad hoc* order sanctioning at least double the allowance which is being paid to each of these security prisoners pending a detailed consideration of each of the cases by the department within the next 2 or 3 months. I am referring to family allowance. This will certainly ease the situation to some extent for the time being leaving some time to the department to look after each individual case in near future.

Now, Sir, I do not wish to take much time with regard to the detailed aspects of jail administration. I would like to say a few words with regard to the policy of release of security prisoners.

Now, Sir, here I submit that there is no case for the detention of such a large number of persons as security prisoners or even for continuing as convicted prisoners those persons who were arrested for technical offences during the August disturbances of 1942. The Hon'ble Home Minister the other day in reply to my appeal for a general release of political prisoners said that it was difficult to grant such a request in view of the serious situation now prevailing in the province. Now I join issue there. I told him, Sir, and I repeat again today that representations have come to the Home Minister and also to the Governor of the province signed by a large number of political prisoners stating that they are prepared to give an undertaking that they will absorb themselves in relief work and nothing else if they are released. There was no specific reply to that statement which I made the other day. I would ask Sir Nazimuddin to declare if this is true or not.

Now, Sir, the question of release of political prisoners is to be considered from a broader point of view. I believe that here the Government policy has bungled—it is not the policy of the Provincial Government alone but it was the policy of the Government of India as well that the people of India were not to be trusted. A great opportunity has been lost and I believe that even if now steps are retraced and a different outlook is brought to bear on the administration of the country it may lead to a better and peaceful atmosphere in this province and outside. It is true, Sir, that there are many people who hold very strong political views with regard to British administration in this country. That is perfectly true. At the same time, this is also true that most of the persons who hold such views that British rule in this country should terminate and India should have self-government just as England wants that she should not be touched by Germany or Japan or any other country—most of the people residing in this province and this country do not want that any other foreign power should come and dominate over India. We do not want any foreign domination. We do not want Japan or Germany to come and rule just as we do not want that England should continue to dominate over the affairs of India for all time to come. I think, Sir, that if the Government of Bengal and the Government of India specially had looked upon the general administrative questions from this wider point of view and made an appeal for co-operation to all sections of the people the situation in the province would have undergone a radical change.

Specially at this juncture when the province is actually in the midst of a famine unparallelled in the history of modern India, it is necessary that we should mobilise our resources both in respect of men and materials, from whichever quarter such assistance may be forthcoming and when it is a fact that these persons, apart from their own personal considerations and considerations of their family, who are capable of rendering considerable public good for the purpose of alleviating human suffering are prepared to offer their hand of comradeship, why is it that the Government should hesitate to take advantage of such an offer? I would therefore request the Hon'ble Home Minister that he should persuade the Government, either Provincial or Central, specially in view of the crisis through which the province is passing and see to it that there is an immediate alteration of policy with regard to these political prisoners. There is one important aspect of the question to which I wish to draw the special attention of the Hon'ble Home Minister. In previous times these persons were arrested and kept inside jails because it was said that the evidence which was already received against such persons was of such a character that it could not be produced before a court of law. Now we had a Committee over which the late Mr. Justice Panckridge presided last year. It had made recommendations for the release of a number of persons. It had also proposed to consider other cases in due course. We would like to know what has happened to those recommendations and what has happened to the policy envisaged in the report of the Panckridge Committee. It is a fact, a fact which no one could deny, that most of the persons who are kept inside the jail are also persons against whom evidence

is available but that evidence cannot be produced and tested before a court of law. On the other hand, they are persons who were arrested in accordance with what was called a policy of preventive arrests. Most of them were arrested under the orders of the Government of India in accordance with the policy enunciated by it that in view of the threatened movement persons who might be capable of creating disturbances should be kept behind prison bars. The situation has altered today. The tone of the political situation has also changed and more than that the great economic crisis which is practically threatening the very existence of the province requires broad statesmanship and courage on the part of the Government of the day. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Home Minister what his policy is and what is the advice which he has tendered to the Governor, so that we may know if this policy coincides with the policy of the Opposition.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. On what motion has the honourable member been speaking for the last ten minutes?

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I am speaking on the motion of Sir Nazimuddin that so many lakhs of rupees should be granted by the Bengal Legislative Assembly for expenditure under the head "Jails".

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Mookerjee is speaking, if I have understood him aright, on the release of political prisoners.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Without a motion being moved?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is only one aspect.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Which motion, Sir, is he speaking on?

Mr. SPEAKER: All the motions. He can speak on the general demand also.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, I do not propose to take up much time of the House. Sir Nazimuddin has given his answer to the questions which I have put to him. He wants to take shelter under technical objections that I am not entitled to bring this before the House during the budget discussion on the demand for jails.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not dilate on that.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Very well, Sir. I would ask the Hon'ble Home Minister to consider the matter from a wider point of view. If it is his definite policy that these persons cannot be trusted, that they should be definitely kept inside the jails and that they should rot there, then he should say so openly. It is no use his taking shelter under the plea that Mr. Fazlul Huq as Home Minister had done this, that or the other thing. Let us proceed on the assumption that Mr. Fazlul Huq was guilty of a number of sins, and that he failed to do what was

his obvious duty. But the question that we would put to Sir Nazimuddin, the question which Bengal would put to Sir Nazimuddin is this: what is his own policy? What is the policy of his Ministry and what is he going to do to alleviate suffering at a time when statesmanship requires in the interests of the province that these persons should be forthwith released and if they are released it is our deep-rooted conviction that it will not lead to any upheaval of any sort which may endanger the political administration of the province.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, the speakers who have addressed the House today, excepting one, have all had experience of jail life, and of course the last speaker has spoken because of his insatiable thirst for publicity. He could not even allow Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy to bask in the limelight of publicity alone for a day.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: You can always stop the publicity. You have it in your hands. Don't talk rubbish!

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: So that he will have his share of publicity. Sir, most of Dr. Mookerjee's speech related to a subject matter which was discussed in this House and on which a verdict of this House was given. (Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the Leader of the House should not be interrupted in the way in which it has been done. I hope you will all kindly listen to him patiently.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I shall not take up the time of the House in replying to the speech of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee which, with due respect to you, I consider is not relevant. But I will say this much that the policy of this Government about release of political prisoners is that we shall release those whom Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee put in jail, at least a majority of them. (Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Brilliant!) They are being released. See those whom you put in jail are now sitting behind you.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: সব security prisonerদের কি ছেড়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে ?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: They are being released. The people whom you put in jail are being released, and you can see for yourself.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Those whom we do not see, where are they? Answer? (Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to find that there is constant interruption. I would request honourable members on both sides of the House to listen to the Leader of the House patiently.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: When truth is spoken naturally there will be interruption from the other side of the House.

We have listened to moving speeches on jail administration from Mr. Haripada Chattopadhyaya and again today we have heard another. But I would like to ask him what was his contribution when some years ago Government asked for suggestions from members about jail reforms and whether he gave us the benefit of his views?

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Nobody asked for suggestions.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Government did not take any steps to give effect to the suggestions. It simply collected information to ignore it.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I am very glad that somebody at least remembers it. Certain reforms have been given effect to; certain reforms are under consideration and certain others have not been given effect to because of the war.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Reforms were undertaken by other Governments long before the war, though the Bengal Government did not move in the matter.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: That is not a fact. As far as the Bengal Government was concerned, they did take up the question and they did do something. May I ask what did the Government which was in power for 15 months do? After having sent their own party members to jail they left them there, and I am being told by the Chief Whip that today most of the complaints that have been mentioned here refer to a period when we were not in office.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Speak of the present. What have you done for the release of the security prisoners detained in jails?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Then, Sir, I would refer again to the case of assault of which Mr. Chattopadhyay has mentioned. He has himself said that the cases were amicably settled and so the higher authorities were not informed.

As far as the question of supply of foodstuffs to security prisoners is concerned, this is done by the contractors and not by the jail officers. It is quite possible that the contractors may have had to obtain articles at the rates mentioned. I am, however, prepared to have an enquiry made as to why sugar was being supplied at annas 14 per seer. I can understand rice being supplied at Rs. 30 per maund because for ordinary contractors it may not have been possible to get rice at less than Rs. 30 per maund. It may not have been possible for him to supply rice at the controlled rates and he may have had to buy rice in the open market. But so far as sugar is concerned there is no justification for the contractor charging annas 14 per seer for sugar. Steps ought to have been taken in the matter——

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Sugar as well as flour which was charged at Rs. 1-4 per seer.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Yes, about these two articles I am prepared to have an enquiry made——

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the question of supplying foodstuffs to jail prisoners at controlled rates from the Civil Supply Department?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: That is a question for the Civil Supply Department and not for the Jails Department.

As regards the allowance of security prisoners, I am not in a position to state what is the actual percentage of persons among security prisoners who have been given an increased allowance. We have clearly enunciated the policy of increasing the allowances of security prisoners, and I maintain that we are trying to give allowances not only to those prisoners who, according to the policy adopted by us, were contributing to the maintenance of their families, but we have done more; we have stretched the point further, that is to say, where we are convinced that security prisoners who have not been contributing to the maintenance of their families and yet where the families are in a desperate condition, are given sanctioned allowances in such cases. But I maintain that our responsibility towards the families is to the extent to which the prisoners were responsible for the maintenance of their families. The principle on which family allowance is given is that Government having denied him the assistance which he has been giving to his family have given an allowance; that is the principle on which we are working. If there has been delay most of that had taken place during the regime of the previous Government. We are trying to clear up the arrears, and I am in a position today to state that as far as letters are concerned, the I. B. Department have informed me that they have now been able to reduce the delay to the minimum. And except in those cases where it is delayed on account of certain difficulties security prisoners ought now to be receiving letters within two or three days. So far as the I. B. Department is concerned, these letters are dealt with in that department on the very same day they are received.

Now, Sir, we have heard enough about the rigours of jail life. Jail life is meant to be pleasant, especially at the present time when honourable members must realise that we are in a very difficult position as far as jails are concerned, The actual jail population is at the present time 50 per cent. more than what accommodation is available for prisoners. (Ironical cheers and cries of "hear, hear", from the Opposition benches.) Is it that the honourable members opposite want that these people who are dangerous to the civil population like dacoits, thieves and burglars, should be let loose? The number of jail population has increased to over 50 per cent. of that of normal times with the result that there is terrible overcrowding. I agree with Mr. Chattopadhya that the condition of life in jails at the present time is certainly worse than what it was in 1937, 1938 and 1939, owing to the influx of a large number of convicts and other

prisoners. Unfortunately we are not in a position to find a solution of the problem because it is not possible nowadays to find out additional accommodation for jails. We have had premature release of convicts; twice it had been done——

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Yes, jail deliveries just before the civil disobedience movement.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: No, it was after the civil disobedience movement: when the hand of the State was forced by the civil disobedience movement, then only jail deliveries had been made.

Similarly, the conditions in the jail hospitals are not what you would like them to be. Naturally there must be some difference between senior I.M.S. Superintendents in charge of jails and ordinary officers whom we have had to appoint owing to paucity of doctors. But I do not accept generally the complaints made about the jail hospitals and medical treatment in jails. I know of one case: a security prisoner was kept in a hospital in a furnished room; he was allowed to have food brought in from outside and his wife was allowed to visit him whenever she liked and even was allowed to stay at night. Then there is the complaint about the supply of an iron cot without any mattress for about a month. This was again not in our time. At a time when a large number of security prisoners were lodged in jails necessary articles required for their use were not to be found and for two or three months there was considerable difficulty in providing clothings, utensils and other things and so there might have been some amount of inconveniences. Even now in certain jails utensils could not yet be provided because of such a large number of prisoners being lodged there about a year ago.

Now, Sir, whenever complaints are brought to our notice, I do take action provided I am satisfied that officers have been guilty. I can assure members of this House that we make no differentiation between one class of warders and another. So far as the promotion of jailors is concerned, out of 26 jailors only two are reserved for European warders and the rest are open to all. These two are in the Presidency Jail and the Alipore Jail, because there is always a cosmopolitan crowd in either of these two jails. Otherwise promotions are made on merit and seniority. It is no use saying every time that most of the complaints refer to the time when we were not in office for I realise that there are rigours in jail life. In jail we have got to maintain discipline though I do not mean that discipline means oppression, that discipline means beating up of convicts. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Neither oppression means discipline.) No. What discipline does mean is that if orders are given, they should be carried out and if you do not carry out those orders, you lay yourself open to punishment. If that is not done, it is very difficult to maintain order in jail where a large number of a very dangerous type of persons are confined. We have heard today only the extreme cases, but there are others where, I think, a different story may be told. I will therefore not take any more time of the House.

Sir, no one is more anxious than myself for jail reforms. We have been in office only for the last five months. Last time when we took office, we went in for jail reforms. We asked for assistance of experienced men to help us in bringing in reforms and I again ask for it. I am prepared —not now but when we are a little free from the acuteness of this food question and this distress—to sit with honourable members of the Opposition who are interested in this question and who have got, as they claim, inside information, to discuss what steps we can take immediately and what steps we can take later on a long policy to improve the condition of prisoners and make it more humane. I am sure members will not find me lagging behind in giving effect to those things which are practicable and which can be given effect to immediately.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: What about setting at liberty those persons who were convicted under the Special Courts Ordinance?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: There I think the honourable member is making a great mistake. The last judgment of the Calcutta High Court means that they have suggested that all cases should be put up before the District Judge and the District Judge will decide whether there should be a re-trial or they should be let off or what should be done. The matter has been left to the District Judge and the cases are pending there. I am almost certain that it was a very difficult judgment to follow. The matter is now entirely in the hands of the District Judge.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Conviction and sentence have not been legalised by the Validating Ordinance.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a different interpretation of the judgment.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I think I am correct in what I am saying and this is at least the legal advice that we have got. We are not keeping anybody against the judgment and that is how the situation stands at present.

I think I have covered all the points that have been raised here and I hope the honourable members are satisfied.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Why is not section 272 of the Jail Code enforced? This section says that European warders are only eligible to be jailors when they are colloquially acquainted with the vernacular language of the district. Why this is not enforced because they do not know a word of our language?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I will look into it.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Sir, may I ask one question arising out of the illuminating speech——

Mr. SPEAKER: It may not be illuminating to you but it may be illuminating to others. That does not matter. What is your point?

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: I am asking for illumination on one point only. The question is this. Does the Foodgrains Control Order, 1943, apply to the contractors who supply rice to the jails or does it not?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Well, Sir, I do not know what is the object of this question, but if the honourable member is assuming that these contractors have been supplying rice to the security prisoners at prices higher than those in the Order, I can assure him that I will have it enquired into and have them prosecuted if they have violated the Order.

The motion of Babu Radha Nath Das that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

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The motion of Mr. Haripada Chattopadhyay that the demand of Rs. 56,74,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—66.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.

Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Mahtab, Maharajadhiraja Bahadur, Uday Chand, of Burdwan.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. B.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Nandy, Maharaja Srischandra, of Cossimbazar.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahur Rahman, Maulvi.

NOES—113.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rashid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McGregor, Mr. G. G.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.

Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.
Zillur Rahman Shah Choudhury Maulvi.

The Ayes being 66 and the Noes 113 the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 56,74,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" was then put and agreed to.

29—Police.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 2,71,63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "29—Police".

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100.

I move this motion in order to raise a discussion about the inefficiency of the department in investigating and proving the specific cases under the Defence of India Rules brought against persons during the last Congress movement and in particular the inefficiency of Special Branch and Intelligence Branch Department of police in respect of censoring letters to and by the political prisoners, in the matter of investigation of applications for leave by the political prisoners in very emergent cases, investigation of applications for interviews, ordinary and legal, and for family allowances.

As far as I know in about 95 specific cases under the Defence of India Rules brought against persons except cases for making speeches in public meetings, the police could not prove the cases and in the long run had to withdraw them. This proves certainly the inefficiency of the police. That is really the Government's look out and not mine. But my object is to show that upon such flimsy evidence people, innocent people, can be detained as security prisoners. When these cases were withdrawn as the police could not prove even after four or five months' detention of the accused as under-trial prisoners, these persons were generally detained as security prisoners. Only to show the scantiness of the evidence on which persons were arrested and harassed and detained, I have brought this motion before the House. Sir, whenever the question of release of political prisoners has come up we have heard the Ministers to say that they would release the political prisoners by examining and looking into individual records. To show the value of these *ex parte* records I have brought this motion.

As regards the inefficiency of the Special Branch and Intelligence Branch Department of police in respect of censoring letters, I referred elaborately in my speech in the last session that in certain cases they took about 91 days and 76 days to censor letters. The time taken in censoring these letters is certainly very long and the Criminal Investigation Department, Deputy Inspector-General, Intelligence Branch of Bengal and Superintendent of Police, Jalpaiguri, are the persons who are very much guilty of taking so long a time. In cases of censor, all other police officers and Intelligence Branch Department in different jails are not to be blamed so much as the Criminal Investigation Department, Deputy Inspector-General and Intelligence Branch of Bengal and the Superintendent of Police, Jalpaiguri.

As regards the investigation of applications for leave of political prisoners in very emergent cases, I may refer to one instance, namely, the case of one security prisoner, Sj. Birendra Nath Bhattacharji who was detained in the Rajshahi Jail. His aged mother was in death bed and he applied for leave to see his mother. But the Police Department took so much time to investigate the case that he could not even attend the *sradh* ceremony, though I brought to the notice of the Home Minister the case of this security prisoner. Now there are many such cases. (A Voice: Which Home Minister?) The present Home Minister. I spoke to him about this case and he actually intervened in this matter. I was given to understand that his release order was passed but that release order was suppressed for about 12 days——

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is up. I cannot allow you any more time.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, the object of motion is to raise a discussion about failure of the department to detect crimes and increased bribery and corruption, particularly by armed police with additional power of controlling prices of foodstuffs.

As we have very little time at our disposal I shall refer only to two or three points. In the first place I desire to draw attention to the fact that ever since the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin came into office and became Minister in charge of the Police Department, crimes in this province have been on the increase. I say this on the authority of Administration Reports from 1937 right up to the present time. If you refer to the Administration Reports it will be seen that crimes excepting cattle trespass, have been on the increase.

Now, Sir, as regards bribery and corruption it is well known that bribery and corruption are rampant from top to bottom. During the time when Sir William Prentice and Sir Robert Reid were in charge of this department there was an attempt made to put down crimes and corruptions as much as possible, but since then they have increased enormously. That is because Sir Nazimuddin does not care to look into these things. He always depends on the man on the spot. To whatever the department says,

he never says no. He is the "yes man" of the Government. Now he has come back to office. Why? Because after many years' of experience he still continues to be the "yes man" of the Government. Whatever the department will say he will support, and will never say no.

I particularly want to refer to one point, viz., the additional power given to the police for controlling the prices of foodstuffs. So long everything was all right. The village food committees were formed all over the country during the food drive, and there have been complaints from many members that these committees are not doing anything. In many districts they referred to District Officers. The District Officers say that they have no instructions from Government. Why are they sitting idle? With the help of these food committees much could have been done. In the present circumstances of the country when the cry for humanitarian service is so great their services should be utilised. I understand they are willing to offer co-operation to Government and help Government as much as possible. But what has Government done? A large sum has been allotted in the budget to arm the police with additional powers. Their duty is also to control prices of foodstuffs. Wherever the police have made their appearance, there the result has been trouble, and as is well known, Sir, the police are not for detecting crimes but rather for making money out of them.

Sir, I have got personal experience and if the Hon'ble Minister wants any reference I can give him specific cases from which he will realise that the police are there not for helping the people but for getting money from them. There are cases in which the police are going to *hats* and bazars and telling the dealers that the price of paddy is Rs. 12-8 and that of rice is Rs. 24 or Rs. 26 per maund, and unless paddy and rice are sold at those rates they raise a hue and cry, but if something is paid to them, it is all right. Sir, the only thing I would like to point out is that we have had enough of police activities in this country, and the Government will be doing yeoman's service if additional power is not given to the police: the food committees can help the Government in this matter and in that case Government would not stand scandalised as it stands scandalised today.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about——

(*i*) the general policy of the Government in the administration of police;

(*ii*) corruption and bribery in the department, and

(*iii*) failure of the Government in dealing with the vagaries of the police even in cases when the attention of the Government is drawn to their misdeeds.

মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয়, আমার সময় খুব কম, কাজেই আমি খালি একটি দৃষ্টান্ত দেবো। ডাক্তার নৃপেন্দ্র নাথ বসু মহাশয় জনপ্রিয় ডাক্তার এবং কুমিল্লার সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ডাক্তার বললে অত্যুক্তি হয় না। তাঁকে গত মন্ত্রিত্বের শেষে কারাদণ্ড দেওয়া হোলো। এই মন্ত্রিত্বের সময়

কুমিল্লা থেকে আলিপুরে আনবার সময় তাঁকে কোমরে দড়ি দিয়ে হাতে হাতকড়া দিয়ে নিয়ে আসা হয়। পুনরায় এই মন্ত্রিত্বের সময়, Sir Nazimuddinএর মন্ত্রিত্বের সময়, যখন তিনি Alipore জেল থেকে কারাবাসের পরে, এক বৎসর পরে, খালাস হলেন তখন তাঁকে অনর্থক আলিপুর জেল থেকে আলিপুর Courtএ হাতে হাতকড়ি দিয়ে কোমরে দড়ি দিয়ে কলিকাতার রাস্তার উপর দিয়ে হাঁটিয়ে নিয়ে যাওয়া হয়: সেখানে কোন ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটের কাছেই তাঁকে হাজির করা হয় না, অনর্থক আবার সেখান থেকে তাঁকে ঘুরিয়ে এনে ১২৯এ গ্রেপ্তার করে আলিপুর জেলে ঢুকিয়ে দেওয়া হয়। আমরা মানলাম যে British সরকারের পক্ষে অসম্ভব বিপদ হোতো তিনি আমাদের ডাক্তার নৃপেন্দ্র নাথ বসু, বাইরে থাকলে, এবং British সাম্রাজ্য ধ্বংসই বা হয়ে যেত; সেজন্য তাঁকে ১২৯ ধারায় আটকে রাখা দরকার। যদি তাইই হয়, তাহলে এইভাবে কেন অনর্থক এই সম্ভ্রান্ত জনপ্রিয় নেতাকে কলিকাতার রাস্তা দিয়ে, আমাদের স্বরাষ্ট্র সচিবের সময়, তাঁকে আলিপুর কোর্টে নিয়ে যাওয়া হোলো, কেনই বা আবার ফিরিয়ে আনা হোলো। জেলের গেটে ১২৯ ধারায় গ্রেপ্তার করে জেলে পুরে দিলে কি চ'লত না? আমি জেল থেকে এ বিষয় মাননীয় তুলসী গোস্বামী মহাশয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করে চিঠি লিখি কিন্তু তার কোন জবাব পাই নি। যদি ১২৯ ধারায় গ্রেপ্তার করে জনপ্রিয় নেতাদের কলিকাতার রাস্তায় কোমরে দড়ি দিয়ে, হাতে হাতকড়ি দিয়ে হাঁটিয়ে, additional অপমান করা উদ্দেশ্য বা নীতি এই সরকারের না হয় তা হলে তাঁরা এ বিষয় enquiry করে দেখতে পারেন।

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the utter unfitness of Mr. R. C. Pollard to hold the post of the Superintendent of Police, Murshidabad, and the failure of Government to check his excesses and abuse of power and position.

Sir, it is, I realise, a rather unusual procedure——

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. As this case is *sub judice* I do not think that the matter can be discussed in this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, this matter is *sub judice*——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Which matter, Sir? I have not referred to any case.

Mr. SPEAKER: If you do not refer to the circumstances of the case and if you do not make any reference to any matter relating to any case that is pending in any court of law with regard to Mr. R. C. Pollard, then and then only I can allow you to speak on this.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I submit to your ruling, Sir, and I would like the Hon'ble Chief Minister not to get nervous at this stage. If he finds me digressing on to a matter coming under the mischief of the rules regarding *sub judice* case, I would most willingly act up to your ruling. But let him not get nervous over it now.

Sir, it is quite unusual for any honourable member of this House to try to make a particular mention and honour through that mention any officer of the Government, and I for one would not have cared to drag the name of any individual officer into the debate of this Assembly unless I felt that it would be in general public interest.

Sir, this officer Mr. R. C. Pollard is a type by himself. He is a chip of the old bloc: he thinks that he is one of the direct descendants of Clive and Warren Hastings and that on him rests the most important responsibility of recreating and re-establishing the mighty British power in the Empire in the East. The whole idea of this officer from the very beginning of his career seems to be infected with the conception that the Englishman —the Britisher—in India has got a special responsibility and that responsibility is to carry out the white man's burden. Unfortunately enough, there are still some such white men left in this country, connected not merely with the Executive Service but also with the Judiciary, who feel that to them it is a bounden duty to maintain the prestige of the white races even though one individual member thereof might go so much wrong in the estimates of human relations and human values that his conduct will not stand the scrutiny of any civilised examination for a moment. The vile conspiracy that has circled round Mr. R. C. Pollard is the real objective of my motion today over which I have asked the House to express its opinion. Mr. R. C. Pollard is a young man: he was born in 1908. As a young man he was called upon to accept the important office of an Assistant Superintendent of Police in this country, and whatever might have been his education in the British University, when he set his foot on this soil he at once thought that it was his noble heritage which he must protect, and one of the first few acts of vandalism on poor, unfortunate, helpless and unarmed people of this province was that he assaulted a manacled prisoner named Babu Dhiresh Chandra Chakravarty years ago when he was a young police officer stationed at a mufassal centre. This matter formed the subject-matter of the debate in this House, not in the present Assembly but in the old Council, and as a result of the forcible demand of the members of this House for an open enquiry, Mr. Prentice did assure some sort of enquiry and an enquiry was held. And what was the result? Up to a certain stage Mr. R. C. Pollard was found guilty and he was asked to explain why a manacled prisoner was assaulted.

(At this stage the blue light was lit.)

Sir, as you know, I am discussing a very important matter and so I will require ten minutes more.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think I will be able to give you so much time. However, you go on.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He was almost going to be dismissed but there came in whiteman's prestige and the then head of the State intervened: "this is in the record of the Secretariat. He was exonerated, and not only exonerated but only after a few years he was invested with the King's Police Medal which is awarded on the discovery of some brilliant work

done by a police officer. While he was thus being, on the one hand, constantly on the watch for exceeding his limits, on the other hand he was getting unusual patronage and patting from officials of the Secretariat, and it is surprising that although many of such officials knew and spoke in their private conversations that he was not at all fit to hold the charge of a district, somehow or other they felt that the whiteman's burden was there and nothing should be done.

Sir, apart from any matter which has led or is likely to lead to litigation I am sure Mr. Pollard's personal conduct is such that he will continue and he has always been continuing to be an important figure in litigations. There are many cases which do not see the light of the day because either the persons afflicted have not the necessary financial or other backing to go against the mighty upholder of British prestige of police of a district, or it may be that the friends on the Bench might prevent prosecutions or proceedings——

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you mean any reflection on anybody?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Friends on the Bench.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a very vague expression. If that is a reflection on the Judges you cannot use it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, this Mr. Pollard is not fit to hold charge of a district for numerous reasons and one such reason is that he is oppressing his own menials, servants, tailors and anybody who comes near him. He does not pay legitimate charges of tailors working in his house. When the tailor comes he assaults him. The poor tailor cannot go to court because he is the mighty Superintendent of Police. He does not pay the usual motor registration tax to Government, and, Sir, when the department in charge of collecting motor tax calls for the same and asks him to pay up he says, "I am the Police Superintendent; I am not going to submit", and the correspondence went on. The Secretariat office will show that ultimately the head of the particular department in the district of Murshidabad had to seek the protection of Government in the Secretariat to get the money realised from Mr. Pollard. Sir, for three long years he did not pay his dues to the Motor Vehicles Tax Department.

Another interesting thing is that he thinks that the only way to get the administration properly carried on is by physical assaults, and sometimes what happens is this. Several instances of humble under-trials having been assaulted have come to the notice of the authorities. But nothing is being done. There is one very sad instance of an under-trial prisoner having died as a result of assault in the district of Murshidabad. No enquiry was held although other prisoners had brought it to the notice of the officials. Although the lawyer concerned had brought it to the notice nothing was done That was in connection with a robbery case in which certain persons were charged and they were taken under police custody. Similar things are happening. I shall not refer to the numerous instances of assault cases against this officer which are still hanging now and in some of these cases it will be proved to the hilt in future——

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot make any reference to those cases.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am not referring to any particular case, but, Sir, I want the Hon'ble the Chief Minister to realise that so long as he or any person of his status remains in charge of the administration he should at least have the fairness to place this officer in the same category as other ordinary humble citizens in taking their trial before courts of law. You could not deny justice to other hundreds of citizens. You should not allow a particular person to take his trial while sitting over the head of the police administration in the area while others will have to get evidence under numerous difficulties, against the open and direct application of the Police Superintendent's personal power and abuse of power to get evidence created or evidence thwarted in that particular district. At the present moment I would not like to refer to that also. There was the famous case of Jiaganj rice looting which is going to——

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a different thing altogether. Do not make any reference to that. That is *sub judice*.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am not referring to that case. In that connection Mr. Pollard sent for two witnesses from a distance of 14 miles at dead of night

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you making any reference to Jiaganj case?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am referring to an attempt by Mr Pollard to create false evidence in connection with that case.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, I won't allow it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: All right, I will not refer to that. This Mr. Pollard goes about the streets of the town and of the district parading his might while he writes letters to the Deputy Inspector-General, Criminal Investigation Department, over the district head of the administration. He accused right and left all the Indian officials of the place. He tried to bring into dispute the Subdivisional Officer of the place because he had the boldness and independent spirit of having convicted him and after enquiry all that has been found to be without any foundation. But, Sir, this secret and most mendacious assistance that he is getting from the secretariat over here and from the white officers of the Secretariat in particular has made administration virtually impossible.

Sir, Mr. Pollard does not care the District Magistrate, he does not care even the Divisional Commissioner. The Divisional Commissioner whom I approached personally told me in no uncertain terms "I am fed up with him. I tried myself and I have several times written to Government to have him transferred, but if those that are in power won't do it, what can I do." When Mr. Blair was the Chief Secretary, I approached him. Unfortunately he is not here now and probably his testimony will not be available. But he told me in no uncertain terms "We are all fed up with him. I think the fit place for him would be to send him to the war. He would be the proper person on the Burmese front." I say that his transfer

was virtually fixed and ordered but I do not know what stood in the way. This is an officer who is a type by himself. I submit, Sir, with all the emphasis that I can command that this officer should no longer be permitted to stay in that office because he does not understand the responsibility of his office. He is oppressive in his dealings, discourteous to the people and he does not care for the policy that Government proposes to pursue in regard to the administration of the Police Department.

Sir, one word more and I have done. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, my esteemed friend, who always stands up for justice and fair play (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Pretends to!) said a few words in favour of certain eminent persons and also had certain observations made regarding the famous judgment in the Pollard case and I would refresh his memory through the observations that he made in the columns of the "Morning News".

I would submit that in Mr. Pollard we have a type of British Imperialism tagged with white conspiracy of the meanest order that should be completely uprooted. In connection with that conspiracy certain observations were made of one who holds a very high position in the Judiciary——

Mr. SPEAKER: I won't allow that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Why, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have understood the trend of your argument. I won't allow that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Chief Justice of Bengal was required to deal justice but has instead indulged in observations which prove his utter unfitness to hold the office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is over.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He in his privileged position abused his power and in the meanest way reflected on the conduct of the ex-Chief Minister.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, one may mark the change of time that the new Constitution has made. One may see it from the importance that the Opposition nowadays attach to the police demand. Those who belonged to the old Council before the Reforms would remember how Police budget and the police demand used to be allowed a longer time. Police budget used to be treated as the chief target of attack. In those days more than one day used to be allotted to the Police budget. I believe it is the new Constitution that is responsible for this change.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Please come to the point. Time is short.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Nowadays Police budget is one of those subjects which excite the least interest and the very thin attendance of the Opposition members on the Police debate is an evidence of this fact.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Why this archaeological investigation?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: If we leave out the speech of Dr. Sanyal for the time being, we find that the other two speeches, especially the speech of Mr. P. Banerji is one which can be found in any Assembly proceedings of the last five years——

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of order, Sir. What are we discussing before the House? The old Council or the issue before the House?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, as far as the allegagations against the Police are concerned, whenever they are brought to our notice, they are enquired into. There is not a single service under Government or local bodies where more disciplinary action is taken than in the case of the Police There are more dismissals, more punishments, more drastic steps taken in the Police Department of Government than in any other department.

Mr. P. BANERJI: And more reinstatements are there!

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: They are the most corrupt.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: And, therefore, our policy is to eliminate corruption and oppression of the Police. I have insisted on this on every occasion from the Police force I have impressed this upon the superior officers and at all conferences of the Deputy Inspectors-General. I have made it clear that we are not going to support the *zulum* or high-handedness or any corruption by the Police and in no circumstances can they expect any support from us. But in the maintenance of law and order and in the discharge of their duties, if mistakes are made where there is no question of *zulum* or oppression, they can expect full support from Government. Therefore, Sir, I feel that this question of corruption in the Police can only be effectively dealt with if we have the support of the public.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: (Cries of oh, oh!) That is support of the oppressed!

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Support of the public; support of Dr. Sanyal or of anybody else who will not be a party to corruption.

Mr. J. C. GUPTA: জবাব দেবার কিছু নাই বুঝি?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: If you go through the speeches and discussions on Police budget from time immemorial, you will find that nothing else has been discussed except corruption. Apart from the question of corruption, what other points have been raised here which you would ask me to reply to?

(A voice: What about Mr. Pollard's case?)

Now, as far as the case of Mr. Pollard is concerned, I am not going to express any opinion today or say anything about it, because his case is

likely to come up before me in one way or the other, and, therefore, I feel that it would not be fair for me to express any opinion when I may have to judge his case and his conduct in the near future.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—64.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. B.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Nandy, Maharaja Srischandra, of Cossimbazar.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sanker.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.

NOES—117.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr. (Khulna).
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.

Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hamilton, Mr. K. A.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McGregor, Mr. G. G.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.
Zillur Rahman Shah Choudhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 64 and the Noes 117 the motion was lost.

The motion of Mr. Haripada Chattopadhyay that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. P. Banerji that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu that the demand of Rs. 2,71,63,000 for expenditure under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 2,71,63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "29—Police" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 5-30 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Wednesday, the 22nd September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Wednesday, the 22nd September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 184 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Loss of life and property in cyclone-affected areas of Midnapore and relief granted by Government.

*61. **Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing, thana by thana, in the district of Midnapore, the losses as a result of the cyclone and the tidal bores, occurring in the month of October last, under the following heads, viz.:—

(*i*) the total number of deaths of—

(1) human beings, and

(2) cattle;

(*ii*) the total number of deaths of human beings from cholera and other epidemic diseases after the cyclone and flood up to 31st January, 1943;

(*iii*) the total number of houses destroyed;

(*iv*) the approximate area of cultivated land in acreage, affected by the cyclone and tidal bores, resulting in total and partial destruction of crops;

(*v*) approximate value of the crops damaged;

(*vi*) approximate area in acreage fallen barren temporarily, being inundated by saline flood;

(*vii*) approximate number of tanks and ponds becoming useless for drinking and other purposes being polluted by saline water or corpses and carcasses;

(*viii*) total number of dead bodies of human beings, either buried or burnt by the official agencies and by private persons;

(*ix*) total number of carcasses buried by the Government and private agencies;

(*x*) total number of families completely extinguished having reference to the names of the villages where they lived; and

(*xi*) names of the villages of which 50 to 90 per cent. of inhabitants either were washed away or died of house collapse?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be also pleased to lay on the Table another statement showing, thana by thana—

(*i*) the total number of persons rescued from the affected villages by the Government agencies after the cyclone stopped;

(*ii*) the total number of boats engaged by the Government agencies in rescue work; and

(*iii*) the amount of money spent up to January, 1943, to mitigate the sufferings of the people under the following heads, viz.:—

(1) Gratuitous relief,

(2) Agricultural loan,

(3) Business loan,

(4) Permanent house construction,

(5) Fodder purchase,

(6) Value of fodder supply,

(7) In sinking tube-wells,

(8) In constructing temporary sheds for giving shelter to homeless persons,

(9) Agricultural cattle,

(10) Milch cows,

(11) Medical help,

(12) Clothing,

(13) Food for babies, and

(14) Test relief work?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) (*i*) to (*iv*) A statement is laid on the Library Table.

(*v*) About Rs.11 crores in the district. *Thanawari* figures are not available.

(*vi*) Nil.

(*vii*) Tamluk—about 5,000.

Contai—about 3,500.

(*viii*) Sadar (South)—412.

Sadar (North)—69.

Ghatal—31.

Jhargram—2.

Tamluk—125.

Contai—7,367.

(*ix*) Sadar (South)—500.

Sadar (North)—Nil.

Ghatal—Figures not available.

Jhargram—334.

Tamluk—837.

Contai—5,341.

(*x*) A statement is laid on the Library Table.

(*xi*) The following are the villages in Contai police-station: Pateswarpur, Maslandipur, Baliput, Damodarpur, Manikraiput, Shamraibarti, Jalpai, Janubasan, Sardaput, Banamalipur, Gobindapur, and Madhabpur.

(*b*) (*i*) and (*ii*) The information is not readily available.

(*iii*) *Thanawari* figures are not available.

The up-to-date figures for the district are as follows *ad seriatim*:-

(1) About Rs.63 lakhs.

(2) Over Rs.57 lakhs.

(3) Over Rs.1,16,000.

(4) Over Rs.32 lakhs.

(5) Over Rs.72,000.

(6) Not yet distributed.

(7) About Rs.3 lakhs.

(8) Included in item (4), separate figures not available.

(9) and (10) Included in item (2).

(11) About Rs.2½ lakhs.

(12) About Rs.2·7 lakhs.

(13) About Rs.2·25 lakhs.

(14) About Rs.56 lakhs.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (*b*) (*iii*) (1), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state among how many persons was this 63 lakhs of rupees distributed?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is impossible to say without notice.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state at what rate that gratuitous relief was distributed per family?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: This gratuitous relief includes not merely cash but it was given in kind also.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state at what rate the gratuitous relief in cash was distributed per family?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice because the rate was not uniform.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that a very large number of persons, destitutes from these areas, have now flocked into Calcutta?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: May be.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that about half an hour ago a family consisting of about five persons—four children and one woman—has been found lying near Burrabazar with one child almost in a dying condition removed by the A.R.P., and this family has come from Tamluk area?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I do not know.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (*b*) (*iii*) (4) relating to the distribution of money for permanent construction, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state at what rate the money was distributed for permanent house construction per family?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I cannot say without notice.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that there is a good deal of public grievance that sufficient money was not distributed for house construction?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware.

Amount spent by Government for granting reliefs to people of Bengal.

***62. Dr. SANAULLAH:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing, thana by thana—

(*i*) the amount of—

(1) test relief money, and

(2) gratuitous relief money spent by the Government in the district of Chittagong in the months of March, April, May and June, 1943;

(*ii*) the total amount spent on those heads in each district of the Province during the said months;

(*iii*) the amount of money requisitioned by the District Officer, Chittagong, for the purpose; and

(*iv*) the amount sanctioned by the Government during the said months?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the District Board of Chittagong approached the Government for an amount of—

(*i*) Rs.75,000 for test relief work; and

(*ii*) Rs.25,000 for gratuitous relief as a first instalment during the said months?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) Statements marked I and II are laid on the Library Table.

		Rs.
(*iii*) Test relief	... ...	1,00,000
Gratuitous relief	... ...	45,000
(*iv*) Test relief	... ...	1,00,000
Gratuitous relief	... ...	45,000

(*b*) Yes.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action has been taken by Government to see that gratuitous relief and other forms of relief in Midnapore flood-affected areas may not be withdrawn or stopped or reduced but may be continued in order at least to prevent destitute people from those areas from coming to elsewhere and seeking shelter?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Certainly.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, my question is what measures are Government contemplating to take or have taken to see that gratuitous relief or other forms of relief which were being continued in Midnapore are not reduced or stopped in order to prevent such people from coming into Calcutta and such other areas?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Since the relief has been continued, that question does not arise.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSHAN SINHA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the Government relief operations in the cyclone-affected tracts of Midnapore are not working well for the fact that voluntary workers are not available?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No.

Dr. GOBINDA CHANDRA BHOWMICK: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that gratuitous relief has now been stopped for which lots of people are dying just now?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It has not been stopped.

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answer to which was laid on the table)

Panel of Assistant Head Masters during 1942.

27. Maulvi ABDUL HAKIM: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the names;

(*ii*) the experience; and

(*iii*) qualification of persons empanelled this year for the posts of Assistant Head Masters?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there have been cases of supersession?

(*c*) If so, on what grounds?

MINISTER in charge of the EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*) A statement furnishing the required particulars is laid on the Library Table.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) The officers superseded were not considered fit for promotion

Babu MADHU SUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the communal ratio rules were taken into consideration at the time of constitution of the panel?

Khan Sahib Maulvi MAFIZUDDIN AHMED: Communal ratio rules are not generally observed at the time of constituting the panel, because the main thing that is taken into consideration is the question of seniority and efficiency.

Undisposed of Questions.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, may I again remind you and through you the office that questions that have been sent by the Government to the Assembly Department may not be held back. I understand, Sir, that one question addressed to the Hon'ble Revenue Minister relating to the Board of Revenue—the number of cases that the Board of Revenue have been examining during the last three years and so on—of which I specifically enquired of him yesterday, if he had actually sent the reply to this office, has been replied and the question had been sent to this office four days ago and yet I do not know where it is lying and how is it that the question has not appeared in the order paper of the Assembly. Further, Sir, I would like to enquire what has happened to the short-notice question which I have put in regarding the relation of Mr. Stevens, the new Food and Civil Supplies Commissioner to the Civil Supplies Directorate and the Hon'ble Minister in charge. There is a good deal of speculation about the appointment of a new Food Commissioner and I would like some light to be thrown before tomorrow's debate starts.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I can give the answer now. Mr. Stevens is the Secretary of the Civil Supplies Department.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, so far as the first part of your question is concerned, I enquired of the office even this morning and I was told that so far as this office is concerned, they are trying their best to put before the Assembly answers that are received from the departments. With regard to the question specifically mentioned by you, you say it is four days.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, three days ago the Hon'ble Minister told me.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have just enquired and I am told that no question is now pending in the Assembly Department. It might be in the press or somewhere else. The cycle requires about four days—that is what I am told. With regard to one question I must tell the House that the question is now pending before me for my orders. It involves some question of procedure, but there is no delay as far as I can see in my office.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: If it is four days that is ordinarily taken by the office to place questions before the House, then am I to understand that questions received by your office on or after the 25th instant will have no chance of being placed before the Assembly during the present session?

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, the best course would be for you to kindly see me in my chamber. I will look into the matter personally.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We have been hammering this question out for a long time and if no improvement is effected, there is no help.

Mr. SPEAKER: I can assure you that there will be absolutely no delay in the Assembly Department with regard to this matter.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, may I enquire what is the fate of my question relating to the delay in passing orders with regard to increment of family allowances of security prisoners?

Mr. SPEAKER: It will be better if the time of the House is not taken up in this way. Kindly see me in my chamber.

Statement on Food Situation.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, I am glad that I have an opportunity of making a bald statement today on the present aspect of the food situation—— (Interruption from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: If honourable members are not desirous of hearing my statement I am not anxious to make a statement in the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The position is that last night Mr. Roy wanted that the Ministry should make a statement with regard to the food situation and that statement is going to be made by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies, and I hope you will kindly give him a patient hearing.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: It is not a case of patient hearing. The honourable Leader of the Congress Party asked us to make a statement on what steps Government were taking and I am here to make the statement. If honourable members in the Opposition do not wish to hear me I am not anxious to make the statement at all.

I am glad I have an opportunity of making a bald statement today on the present aspect of the food situation divorced from controversies and in an atmosphere in which contemptuous and contemptible words surcharged with venom and with an eye to political propaganda——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Can't you give a bald and bare statement? Can't you leave all this nonsense out? It is absolutely nonsense.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Thoroughly contemptuous.

Mr. SPEAKER: He is just making a preliminary remark. If you can't tolerate even that preliminary remark it is very difficult. I hope you will bear him.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He starts with giving offence—venom and with an eye to political propaganda.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I am not giving offence. I hope that such remarks will be foreign in today's controversy. I was going to say—with an eye to political propaganda will be foreign. Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, the honourable Leader of the Congress Party, does not wish to enter into the reason why rice has disappeared from the market. So be it. The fact remains that in some areas in Bengal it has so disappeared and the very natural question is—what are Government doing about it?

I shall first deal with greater Calcutta which is a wholly consuming centre. In this city rice and other foodgrains are still being distributed to more than two million people——

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: It is no use the Minister making the statement if I cannot hear him.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: May I request the honourable Leader of the Opposition to come to this side.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: May I request the Minister to stand up here at the centre? (Laughter.) That would be better. Come along here and talk loudly with a brave heart.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I am not so young as the honourable Leader of the Opposition. (Laughter.)

In this city rice and other foodgrains are still being distributed to more than two million people through the industrial organisations, the Government of India and the Government of Bengal's employees' shops, the public utility companies, the railways, the Ordnance factories, the A.R.P., organisations and a number of miscellaneous departments and organisations. About a lakh and 80 thousand maunds of rice per month are distributed through Government controlled shops and distributing centres, that is to say, an average of 6,000 maunds a day. Food can be obtained in hotels, restaurants, and eating houses so that no one who has money need starve. *Atta* is being sold through the controlled shops of Government, through shops under the immediate control of the mills and through industrial organisations—altogether 360,000 maunds in the last month. A large

number of relief kitchens and cheap canteens are in operation in Calcutta and some organisations are even distributing free rice amongst the middle class people. To cater for the residue of the people that do not fall amongst any of the different categories we are taking steps to put more rice, *atta* and *bajra* on the market. I may state here that there is no dearth of *dal* and *kalai*. The police have investigated each case where retailers have closed their shops. They have examined the books of the wholesale dealers to ascertain their stock and the reason why they are not putting the stock on the market. Orders have been issued to cancel the licences of those dealers who voluntarily do not put their stocks on the market or who have ceased to trade, whether they are retailers or wholesalers, and also to prosecute them. In order to conserve and distribute the stock of wholesalers and the mills, retail shops were linked to wholesale dealers. The northern area was linked to the wholesale dealers of Ramkrishnapur in Howrah, while the southern area to the wholesale dealers and mills of Chetla. A certain amount of rice has been assigned to each retail dealer who wishes to continue business. The other day, I went to Jagu Babu's Bazar and made enquiries and found that arrangements have been made to supply 100 shops with 4 maunds of rice per day per shop and similar arrangements have been made in the other markets. Where we have found concealed stocks of rice we have taken possession of them. You may have seen in the papers that in Kumartuli 6,000 maunds of rice have been unearthed and these have been placed on the market through retailers; 3,000 maunds of rice from Chetla have similarly been put on the market; 20,000 maunds of paddy are being milled to be put on the market. The position is definitely improving and more and more stocks are being placed at our disposal by the dealers who are prepared to play the game. The wheat supplies from India have been satisfactory and this is the first time in our existence that we have substantial stocks which we can place on the market. Distribution has to be carefully made. Frittering it away on the market is bound to lead to black marketing and for that again Government will be rightly held responsible. Through the Flour Dealers' Association we are opening up 200 shops and through them we are going to place additional stocks of 40,000 maunds of *atta* per week on the market. We propose through suitable agencies to put in additional quantities of 3,000 maunds of rice per day on the market. *Atta* will be sold at 6 annas per seer retail and rice at the controlled retail rate of price. As I have said above, there are plenty of other foodgrains like *dal* and *kalai* on the market which are also food. We are also placing considerable quantities of *bajra* on the market at 4-6 per seer retail price. If necessity arose, I could flood the markets of Calcutta with *bajra*, but the reason why we are not doing so is that we do not want the *chakkis* to have sufficient *bajra* in their possession to adulterate the pure wheat products which we are putting on the market and thus make clandestine profits and incidentally place an unpalatable product for consumption. Over and above this, we are keeping a tally of all the foodgrains which are coming to the railway stations, whether it is consigned to us or to private merchants. The railways have been instructed not to allow persons to take their goods away from their sheds without the permission of

the Civil Supplies Department. Everyday they send us an account of the arrivals and for the time being we have decided to take up all rice and *arhar dal* and mustard seeds consigned to Calcutta in the name of private persons so as to secure equitable distribution. Of course, this does not apply to consignments sent to relief organisations who will have their supplies released to them. The Civil Supplies Department take over the consignments which Government have proposed to retain and the parties can take the rest away without having to submit their railway receipts to us so that the whole matter is not delayed by the issue of permits, etc. Frankly, Sir, the steps which are in operation, and the steps which we are taking and are about to take in course of a day or two will meet the situation satisfactorily, and there will be no outcry of lack of foodgrains in Calcutta except for political reasons. But there is one thing here that I should like to be well known that the distribution from the shops will not be on a wholesale scale. A person wanting a maund of rice all at once will find it difficult to secure it.

Now, as regards the mufassal, District Magistrates and Subdivisional Officers have been instructed to get foodgrains from whatever sources they can and to see that the markets flow. It is within their power—— (A voice: From the sky?) There are some foodgrains. If there were no foodgrains in Bengal, 60 million people would be dying tomorrow. It is within their powers to requisition stocks wheresoever available and to put them on the market at whatsoever price they think advisable, subject of course to its being within the controlled price. Subordinate officers, such as Circle Officers and Police Officers——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it within their power to manufacture rice out of air?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: As there is going to be a discussion on the food situation, I shall give a reply at that time. I maintain, Sir, that there is rice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not in all parts.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: In some parts.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What about other parts?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I agree with Dr. Sanyal that rice is not available in all parts——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: When you speak in general terms, you must make a distinction.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Subordinate officers, such as Circle Officers and Police Officers, have powers to freeze stocks and then approach their Subdivisional Officers or District Magistrates, get an order for acquisition and place the stocks on the market. These powers have not, unfortunately, been very well understood in spite of instructions and we are in constant telegraphic communication with the local officers urging them to take these steps. The local officers have also powers to acquire these

stocks at lower rates so as to bring home to the traders and the agriculturists that it is to their advantage to continue to trade and to sell at prices fixed by Government than to withhold stocks and bring about a collapse of the social machinery. We hope that by this means the agriculturists and traders will realise their obligations and in their own interest and for their own profit will place stocks on the market. It is to be clearly understood that there is no going back on our price control; prices announced by us will be maintained and severer and severer measures will be taken to enforce it. In the meantime District Magistrates have been asked to place all their seized stocks and requisitioned stocks, which apparently they were keeping back in order to meet a still worse time ahead, on the market and to use all their powers to see that the relief kitchens and the cheap grain shops are kept in operation. Apart from this, we are sending rice from Calcutta. I have already announced my programme and a considerable amount of foodgrains are on the way and arrangements have been made for the despatch of the balance. 8,000 tons of rice are being sent to the various mufassal areas directly from the Central Provinces. These are going to the deficit areas. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Which areas?) I have not got the distribution scheme here. I shall give you the distribution when the food debate will come up. Up till now we have never had sufficient amount to plan distribution even to meet the acute needs of our cheap grain shops. Now we are beginning to get supplies in any quantity for the first time. We are sending them out to deficit districts, but it is clear that we shall never have sufficient supplies in Calcutta to fill the markets of Bengal This is not a feasible proposition We are therefore concentrating on those areas where there is an acute distress, but obviously no one will expect that I should send foodgrains to surplus areas, when there are so many deficit areas in great distress. Let us take, for example, the case of Jessore. Everybody knows that Jessore is a surplus area——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We do not know Bongaon may be, but not Jessore as a whole.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Although our paddy price today is Rs. 12-8, paddy at Bongaon is selling at Rs. 10; yet there is something seriously wrong there, if there is no rice in Jessore. In any event we shall look into the matter but surely no one expects that we should send rice from Jessore to Calcutta when it can be transferred from one part of Jessore to another. I believe, however, we have done even this as an emergent measure. Apart from the stocks which are being sent to Calcutta—stocks which only very recently arrived (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Maulvi Serajul Islam will tell you), wheat products are being made available to the districts directly from the despatching centres and 8,000 tons of wheat products are going directly to the mufassal areas. I may state here that we have planned for sending 26,000 tons of wheat products to the mufassal directly from the Punjab, but this will of course depend upon the speed of procurement and despatch from that province. There is also inter-district movement of foodgrains; foodgrains which have been acquired by our agents in the surplus areas are being removed to the deficit areas at once and if

owing to some reason or other there are no foodgrains in the market even in the surplus areas instructions have been issued to utilise our purchases for the purpose of feeding the markets.

These are, in short, the steps that Government are taking in the matter. We are doing our work and I would like to take this opportunity once more to plead for co-operation of the members of the Opposition and of the public at large in carrying out our policy. An attempt is being deliberately made to keep back stocks from the market so that our price control policy may be revised. As I have said before we are not going to take off the control in prices and we are determined to enforce it with greater and greater severity. To the leaders of the public I make an earnest request—those who have influence with the traders, those who have influence with the agriculturists—to use all their influence to see that surplus stocks are placed on the market and that trade and business once more revive.

There is one other point that I would like the honourable members and the public to realise. The amount of rice we have been allotted is very meagre compared to our requirements. Wheat and wheat products and *bajra* are being sent in larger and larger quantities from outside. We must get accustomed to eat these substitute foods, and we shall not be able to satisfy any person who may claim that he must have his customary undiluted rice diet and in quantities in which he used to get it. (Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Try yourself first) Let us all try and put our shoulders to the wheel and tide over the difficulties that surround us on all sides.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I ask one question? Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state——

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir,——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. This is not a discussion. There was a demand from the Opposition yesterday that a statement should be made by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies. He has made that statement. Therefore the matter ends there.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Sir, are we going back on the convention which was established in this House that the Hon'ble Leader of the House and the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition are entitled to make a statement any time?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not going back upon that convention at all.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: At the same time I say this is not an opportune moment.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, I claim the right of expressing the views of the Opposition on the outrageously false statements that have been made.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Now the House will take up the Demand for Grant—General Administration.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation——. (Interruption.)

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I wish to know whether you will permit me to put a question. The Minister has made an appeal to the public for co-operation. Do you expect, Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. I have said already that this is not an opportune moment for raising any discussion on the food problem. Yesterday there was a demand and that demand has been fulfilled and you must rest satisfied with that for the present. The question before the House is a most important matter, viz., the consideration of the Budget. You all know——. (Interruption.)

Order, order. This is not a statement from any Hon'ble Minister. This is a statement from the Chair and I hope you will realise your duty of maintaining the dignity of the House.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I realise my duty towards my own people more than my duty to anything else.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nobody denies that. But your present duty, I think, is to consider the subject that is before you and that is the Demand for Grants.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Do you deny the Leader of the Opposition his customary right to make a statement at any stage?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not the slightest desire, it is far from me, to deny to the Opposition a fair and reasonable opportunity of discussion or even any opportunity to the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement. Now it is desirable to remember in this connection what happened. If the Leader of the Opposition had been here yesterday to make this demand that would have been quite proper. He did not do it. Still I allowed another leader of another group to make this demand and I allowed even another leader to make an addition to that statement in spite of the Opposition of the Hon'ble Minister, and today the Minister for Civil Supplies has made a statement. Due to the importance of the question of food problem, due to the fact that there was a demand and also due to the fact that the statement made that there was scarcity of rice was very serious I allowed it. Otherwise I would not have allowed it. After the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies has made his statement I am sorry I cannot allow the Opposition to make any further statement.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I do not want to make a statement. I want to put questions to the Hon'ble Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know what it means. You will put certain questions about the statement; it will be a sort of cross-examination.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I will put him questions regarding the statement of the Hon'ble Minister which I do not accept as true.

Mr. SPEAKER: No.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I want to put a question specifically. It is not a question of "I have done this, I have done that, and I shall do this". People are dying by thousands and I want to know if this Government can stop what is going on.

Mr. SPEAKER: No discussion is proper at this stage.

DEMAND FOR GRANT.

25—General Administration.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move—— (Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: It appears to me that you are not in a proper mood.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: We are not. We are in a hungry mood; we are in an eating mood. We want to eat up——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Sir Nazimuddin

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of (interruption) Rs. 1,30,83,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration." (Interruption.)

Point of Order.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. It is extremely desirable that we should approach the question in a very dispassionate spirit. You have said that budget discussion is very important, very important from the Opposition point of view. We are going to lose our time for the cut motions. What is the harm Sir, if you allow some of our time to be used by a statement of the Leader of the Opposition on a matter which does not brook any delay. Sir, you have appealed for dispassionate consideration. I appeal also to you as custodian of the rights and dignity of the House to rise to the occasion and to be alive to the importance of the necessity for saving time. I appeal to you, Sir, to revise your ruling and to allow the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement or put questions which is only the same thing but different in phrase. After all the Food Minister has made a departure by making a statement which you have allowed. Why? Because it was necessary. It is also important to know the Opposition point of view. The Leader of the Opposition just as the Leader of the House is above ordinary conventions and the necessities are above the ordinary. Please do not stand in the way of the statement coming from the Leader of the Opposition.

I have here in my pocket a letter which I have just received from the Secretary of the Muslim League of my district. People are dying there and everybody is receiving letters like that. Considering the gravity of the situation budget discussion is a mockery and a mimicry.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think you began with saying that you are going to raise a point of order, but practically you have said everything that could be said on this question.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: On a point of order, Sir. When you have allowed the Food Minister to make a statement are you going not to allow the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement on this all-important question now?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Are you going, Sir, to allow Nero to fiddle when Rome is burning? If that is your order, we on the Opposition will not yield: if it is in order, it is in order; if it is a disorder, it is a disorder: we on this side of the Opposition will not allow the Hon'ble Sir Nazimuddin to move his motion.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, you allowed the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies to make a statement about the position of food supplies as it stands today. Yesterday Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy pointed out to you the seriousness of the situation that has been changing from bad to worse from day to day. It was from that point of view that it was up to the Hon'ble Minister in charge to make a statement. He has made that statement and you say that further discussion will take place on the 27th September, i.e., five days from today. You know, Sir, how the situation is undergoing change from hour to hour; and it is going from bad to worse. We want to have a definite decision on the part of Government in the matter of supply of food to our people. That is the thing which we want and from that point of view the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition wanted to make a statement. He might make some constructive suggestion to the Hon'ble the Food Minister to meet the urgency of the situation. From that point of view I would request you to allow the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement.

Mr. A. F. STARK: May I make one suggestion, Sir? It is that the Hon'ble the Home Minister should be allowed to move the main demand for General Administration and we should pass that motion without discussion and then we can discuss the food question——. (Cries of "No", "No", from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: May I make one request to you, Sir? The House has observed and you must have observed also that as soon as the Minister for Civil Supplies had finished reading his statement he turned his back on the House and immediately ran away. That is most disrespectful to the House, disrespectful to the Speaker and unworthy of the Ministerial Benches. Will you bring him back and teach him good manners?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is beyond my power to teach him. You may teach him if you can. Sir Nazimuddin, I think you have moved your motion.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Before you ask any honourable member to move his cut motion, may I rise and point out to you that the main demand has not been moved.

Mr. SPEAKER: He has moved his demand. Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, item No. 14 comes first before mine.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that the arrangement was that your motion should be moved first.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I submit, Sir, that in the temper that the House is now in, particularly when the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition wanted to make a statement by virtue of the right vested in him by convention, it would be extremely unfair and improper on my part to seek to divert the attention of the House to any other matter which is much less important today for the province than the food question. Sir, I beg of you to permit the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition to make a full statement on this question as he desires to do. In the circumstances if it is your desire, if it is the desire of the Government party to ride rough-shod over the House and get their Budget passed, let them do it. With all the sincerity that we can command, we suggest that the food situation is so grave that that matter must be thrashed out properly before we can apply our mind to anything else. As the order paper shows, our intention is to move the various cut motions and if the Minister in charge has any sense of proportion he would certainly see that some of them can certainly wait and the food situation can be taken up first. It is now 3 o'clock and we can give fifteen or twenty minutes to the Leader of the Opposition to make his statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I called upon you to move your amendment and you have delivered a sermon to me.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, it was far from my mind to deliver any sermon to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: All right, I withdraw the word "sermon" whether it was meant for me or for anybody else. But what I am afraid of is this: without minimising the importance of the food problem, I think you will agree with me that the Budget demand should be passed today—the Budget demand fixed for today.—and in these circumstances you will also agree with me that the Budget demand should be passed first and then as much time that will be left will be given to the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, budget discussions are our privilege and we can wait for half an hour before the Budget is taken up.

Mr. SPEAKER: That may be your privilege, but I hold that the Budget must be finished first, and I call upon you to move your amendment.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Mr. Speaker, may I make one submission? I know and all of us on this side of the House know that the Government by the foot work of its followers can pass this Budget: they have got votes on their side. But I repeat what I said yesterday that, in view of the statement that has been made, which is unsatisfactory—completely unsatisfactorily, it is no use discussing the Budget. As a matter of fact, Sir, if statements and ordinances could provide food, people would have died of over-feeding rather than by starvation. In these circumstances it is no use taking part in the Budget discussion. I and the party which I have the honour to lead will take no part in the proceedings of the House today for it is a shameful mockery to waste time in this House on this Budget discussion.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: May I make a submission, Sir, with due respect to you? You have said that it is your duty to see that the Budget is passed today. There is a time limit and if by that time the Budget is not finished you can automatically apply the guillotine and the Budget will be passed. But what stands in the way of your consenting to the Leader of the Opposition making a statement on the food problem and taking up the time which would ordinarily be taken up by the cut motions which are entirely the property of the Opposition? If they are prepared to part with the privilege, why should the Speaker stand in the way provided the final passing of the Budget is not in any way jeopardised at the appointed time? May I ask you respectfully to consider this suggestion? As Mr. Stark has made the opposite suggestion, I am asking you whether the Leader of the Opposition should not be allowed to make a statement now and ultimately when the time for passing the Budget comes you may consider other aspects of the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think even after I have repeatedly said that the Budget should have precedence it has been argued by member after member that the Leader of the Opposition should be given an opportunity to make a statement before the Budget is taken up. The question is whether it should be taken up before the Budget or after the Budget That is the only point: practically it comes to that. (Cries of "No, no" from the Opposition Benches.) I am now speaking on the suggestion made by Mr. Basu.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: But there will be no business before the House after the Budget is passed.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: They will withdraw after the Budget.

Mr. SPEAKER: But I am not going to adjourn the House: that I can say.

The budget demand has been moved. (A member from the Opposition benches: It has not been moved.) It has been moved. I allowed him to move and he has moved it. If you say it has not been moved, that won't do. The rule says clearly—if you turn to rule 15(3) you will find—"On a day allotted under sub-rule (1) for the voting of demands for grants, no

other business shall, except with the consent of the Speaker, be taken up earlier than one hour before the time previously fixed by the Speaker for adjournment for the day".

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: When those rules were framed, the food situation was not like this.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, it gives the discretion.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: After the rules, many ordinances have been passed and many people have gone from this side to that side.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: The rule does not stand in the way.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: May I appeal again to you not to take away——

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not yet finished. I do not quite understand why this insistence that this statement should come first and then the Budget. That is the real point that is troubling me I have heard a whisper to the effect that after the Budget demands are assented to, perhaps members on the Government side will disappear.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: They may vanish or may not

Mr. SPEAKER: That apprehension, I am afraid, may not be quite correct.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: It is the privilege of the Opposition to utilise the time.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know that it is your privilege to utilise the time in any way you like, but at the same time there are these definite rules which prevent matters relating to Budget being delayed and that is why I am trying to understand why this demand has been made that it should be before the Budget demand and not after the Budget demand. I for myself have not yet been able to understand it. Therefore, I would appeal to you to see that this matter is gone through and then there will be ample opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, may I make this statement. You said just now that you are at a loss to understand what difference there was if you allowed a discussion after the Budget on General Administration——.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not a discussion but a statement.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: If you allowed a statement by the Leader of the Opposition after the Budget on General Administration has been considered and passed. Now, Sir, our submission is this. You allowed a statement to be made today by the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies on a request made by the Opposition yesterday. Now, that itself was something exceptional but you allowed it in view of the exceptional circumstances now prevailing in the province. The statement which has

been made by the Minister we consider to be utterly unsatisfactory. We do not merely wish to raise a discussion on that statement but we are most anxious to put certain specific questions to the Minister in respect of certain matters arising out of this statement itself, particularly with regard to the serious condition prevailing in the mufassal. The Hon'ble Food Minister has said with regard to the mufassal. Government has issued instructions to Magistrates, Subdivisional Officers and police officers to unearth stocks wherever available. Is that going to save the situation?

Now the constitutional point which we raise is this, that having allowed the Hon'ble Minister to make that statement, it is the privilege of the Leader of the Opposition to rise as soon as his statement is made and to put any question or to make any statement as he may consider it necessary. It is not a question of any favour that we are asking either from the House or from yourself. It is a valued right that the Leader of the Opposition should be allowed even in normal circumstances to make a statement whenever he considers that such a statement should me made. Now, that is even more doubly serious in view of the peculiar circumstances under which today's statement by the Minister has been made. We wanted the Minister to remain here. We wanted him to listen to the point of view of the Opposition to be voiced through the Leader of the Opposition and if necessary the Food Minister could have got up and made some supplementary remarks. It may be, Sir, that perhaps from the strictly technical point of view, all these may not be allowed, but the situation in the province is so serious that we feel that we should not add to this present atmosphere of unreality by continuing the Budget discussion on General Administration but rather should have some definite replies from Government with regard to supply and distribution of foodgrains specially for the dying millions of Bengal's population outside the fortunate city of Calcutta.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have heard every aspect of the question and I am of opinion that after the demand for General Administration has been moved by the Home Minister it is desirable that this matter be finished, and after the Budget discussion is finished, then certainly if time is available I would allow the Leader of the Opposition to make a statement. Dr. Sanyal.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My leader has already made the position of this party clear. We consider this Government to be seeking to maintain themselves in power by distributing patronage, by increasing the number of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries——

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you moving?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then I am not going to allow you this.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am not going to listen to this schoolmasterly behaviour from you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I will not. It is absurd. I am standing on my rights and privileges.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Roy.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry I cannot help you in this matter.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Will you permit me now to make a short statement?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Fazlul Huq, I think it would mean for me abdication of my position and I would go out of office altogether rather than to allow this sort of disorderly conduct in this House. (Cries of "hear", "hear" from Government benches.) I would insist upon every member of this House to help me to maintain order in this House. It may be that my ruling is absolutely wrong; it may be that I have not given proper facilities to the Opposition which they are under the rules or under any convention entitled to, but I think if any parliamentary institution is to go on in this country I am entitled to the support and the co-operation of every honourable member of this House. Otherwise it will be simply impossible to carry on administration. It has been said that my conduct is school-masterly. Well, I have been in this House for a pretty long time and I know that sometimes the conduct of the Speaker has to be that of a school master. If there are boys and students, if there are members, who behave like naughty boys, I have got to behave like a school master. It is far from me that I should be harsh on any member. I know the dignity of every member of this House and my dignity is the dignity of the members of this House. If the members are forgetful of that position, I think it is better for the Speaker that he should either leave the Chair or that he should be supported by the members of this House. I want to know if the Opposition is prepared to support me in this matter.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, I am extremely sorry to find that you have lost your temper. You are one of those men about whom I had the highest regard that nothing can ruffle the temper of a man who throughout his life has been not merely a public servant but a servant of the people.

Now, Sir, you have been talking about your dignity. Your dignity is our dignity; your dignity is the dignity of the House, but permit me to point out to you that my dignity is the dignity of the people of Bengal at the present moment. (Applause from the Opposition benches and cries of "question" from the Ministerialist benches.)

I ask you, Sir, not in a spirit of temper but I ask you to bring back to your mind the scene that was enacted by Mr. Suhrawardy. He made a statement—good, bad or indifferent; that is a different matter. Immediately he made the statement he put something into his mouth, turned his back and went out. Sir, I consider it an act of discourtesy to this House, an act of discourtesy to the Opposition, and I submit, Sir, that in these

circumstances we certainly took it very much to heart that such a thing should have happened. You realise, Sir, that it is not a question of Budget. You will allow me two minutes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I permit you to go on.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: You have not allowed me, but if you do allow me I shall be very much obliged. I may tell you that we look upon this Budget as a most dishonest Budget. We do not care two brass buttons whether this Budget is passed or not. The Budget will be passed. People will die in millions, but this House will pass this Budget. It means that all this is not parliamentary procedure but a colossal humbug. We have nothing to do with it. The reason why we are anxious, as my friend Dr. Mookerjee has said, is to point out to the Minister the mistake that he has been committing and to give some very practical suggestions, and, Sir, it is not a question of passing the Budget. If you had allowed us to speak we would have economised time, and after having concentrated on one or two motions we would have passed the Budget without a division. Even now we are willing to pass the Budget without a division if Government gives an undertaking that it would procure and give food to the starving millions of Bengal. Mere words and mere promises will not do. The Minister has said that District Magistrates have been given instructions and directions to find food. I find, Sir, a District Magistrate of a very important district sitting in the gallery. Let him say if he can really find food for his own district. Let him come out and make a statement——.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not in order to refer to the gallery.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: All right, Sir. So far as we are concerned, so far as this particular portion of the demand is concerned, I submit that we do not want to take any part in these discussions. We have economised time for you.

(At this stage the Opposition members walked out of the Chamber.)

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: মাননীয় Speaker মহোদয় Speaker কে এ রকম করবার কি দরকার ছিল ?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have said what I had to say and I have got to do my duty.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes; more than your duty.

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 20 minutes.)

DEMAND FOR GRANT.

25—General Administration.

(After adjournment.)

Mr. SPEAKER: It is unfortunate that the Opposition is not here. But we have got to go on with our work. We cannot but see that the Budget scheduled for today's work is gone through and the expenditure assented to. So I put the first demand to the House.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 1,30,83,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration" was then put and agreed to.

25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 20,62,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation".

Sir, should I make any speech?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, it is not necessary.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal that a sum of Rs. 20,62,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration—Debt Conciliation" was then put and agreed to.

42—Co-operation.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 16,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation"

Sir, I would like to make a short speech on this demand.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not. It is not necessary.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal that a sum of Rs. 16,72,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 3-55 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Thursday, the 23rd September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Thursday, the 23rd September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 193 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Petitions from Budge Budge Jute Workers for a Conciliation Board.

***83. Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce and Labour Department be pleased to state whether Government have received any petition from 30,000 Budge Budge jute workers on the 11th July, 1941, for a Conciliation Board?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have appointed any—

(*i*) Conciliation Board, or
(*ii*) a Court of Enquiry, or
(*iii*) an adjudicator,

in any jute mill dispute up till now?

(*c*) If not, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what actions, if any, Government have taken—

(*i*) to implement the assurances given by a former Minister Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed on behalf of the Government to the Budge Budge strikers at their meeting held on the 15th February, 1942, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, Budge Budge Jute Workers' Union; or

(*ii*) to give effect to the letter of the said Secretary written on their behalf on the 22nd February, 1942, for immediate settlement of the long-pending dispute either—

(1) by arbitration, or
(2) by Conciliation Board, or
(3) by a Court of Enquiry?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any new jute mill dispute regarding any jute mills in Budge Budge and other areas are pending in the file of the Labour Commissioner?

(*f*) If the answer to (*e*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what are the jute workers' demands; and

(*ii*) what action, if any, Government have taken or propose to take to deal with the same?

(*g*) If no action is taken by the Government, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason for the same?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. K. Shahabuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Courts of Enquiry were appointed in connection with trade disputes in Bally Jute Mill and New Central Jute Mill.

(*c*) Does not arise.

(*d*) (*i*) I have no information of any such assurances having been given.

(*ii*) A representation was received from the Secretary, Budge Budge Jute Workers' Union, on behalf of the workers. The Union was requested to furnish full facts and figures in support of the representation. No reply was received from the Union although a reminder was issued. No action on the representation has therefore been possible.

(*e*) Yes.

(*f*) (*i*) Complaints of wrongful dismissal, prayer for gratuity or pension, and demand for adequate supply of foodstuff at low price.

(*ii*) Inquiries have been made regarding alleged wrongful dismissals and prayer for gratuity or pension and suitable action taken in each case. The demand for adequate supply of foodstuff was considered vague. Specific demands have since been formulated which are under consideration.

(*g*) Does not arise.

Cholera in Kakdwip and Government measures to check it.

***64. Mr. P. BANERJI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government (Medical) Department aware of the fact that—

(*i*) cholera in an epidemic form broke out in lot No. 1 (Kakdwip thana) in January last; and

(*ii*) the President, Diamond Harbour Relief Committee, sent a telegram to the Director of Public Health for relief work?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action was taken in the matter?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have so far been taken to cope with the havoc caused and now being caused by cholera in Saugor Islands?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) (*i*) Yes: sporadic cases of cholera occurred.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*b*) The Director of Public Health forwarded a copy of the telegram to the Chairman of the District Board, 24-Parganas, and requested him to appoint locally, at the cost of Government, three temporary epidemic doctors, for anti-cholera work in the affected areas and supplied 20,000 c.c. of anti-cholera vaccine and 20 maunds of unslaked lime.

(*c*) The Director of Public Health authorised the Chairman of the District Board to appoint locally, at the cost of Government, a medical unit comprising—

one medical licentiate, pay Rs.50 *plus* travelling allowance at Rs.20 per month;

one compounder, pay Rs.25 *plus* travelling allowance at Rs.15 per month; and

one medicine carrier, pay Rs.12-8 *plus* travelling allowance at Rs.7-8 per month;

for one month for anti-cholera work and offered a set of medical unit boxes for use in the affected areas.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that anti-cholera vaccines as well as other materials for use as preventive measures to prevent cholera cannot be supplied by Government according to the requirements of district boards, leading to shortage of stocks?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: The demand cannot possibly be met always.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that though this epidemic continued for more than one month, why is it that the Government sanctioned the staff for one month only?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: The district board was asked to furnish information which was, however, not actually received by Government in spite of repeated *takids*.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Is it not a fact that more than 100 cases of death took place in one locality alone, which had suffered from a severe typhoon, from cholera?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice.

Mr. P. BANERJI: What notice does the Hon'ble Minister want in view of the fact that it took a long time for the district board to give replies to certain queries supposed to have been made by Government? May we know what sort of report was expected from the district board by Government?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Am I to understand that the honourable member wants to know what sort of information was asked for from the district board? It does not arise, because it is not in the question.

Mr. P. BANERJI: It arises out of the answer given by the honourable member.

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: We have asked for a report from the district board which has not been complied with.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the cholera vaccines sent from the Public Health Department are not given any priority over other things by the railway authorities and that therefore they are being held up?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I am not aware.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Is it a fact that when the district board gave the information Government remained silent for a long time?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Certainly not.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: In view of the answers given by the honourable member to my previous question, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government desire to increase the stock to meet the necessary requirements to cope with cholera epidemic raging throughout the whole province?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: We are trying not only to increase our own production but we are also trying to secure cholera vaccine from outside to meet our requirements.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Order on bus owners and drivers during Rash festival.

28. Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) bus owners and drivers, who came to Dinajpur from Balurghat for plying on the occasion of *Rash* festivity on the 2nd November, 1941, were threatened with cancellation of their licences by the Licensing Department of the Dinajpur Collectorate; and

(*ii*) they refused to pick up girl students of the Dinajpur Girls' High English School from their respective homes and to take them to school on the 3rd November?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for issuing such threat?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, I beg to draw your attention to the fact that this question was due for reply sometime in February, 1942 and that the purpose of the question has been frustrated by the delay in answering the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will look into the matter.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, I would like to explain——

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not necessary to explain. I have said, I will look into the matter.

Cases filed before the Board of Revenue.

29. Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing during each of the years 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43 as also during the period from April to July, 1943—

(*i*) the number of revenue cases filed before the Board of Revenue;

(*ii*) the number of cases in which hearing was given to the parties or to their lawyers; and

(*iii*) the number of cases rejected by the Board without a hearing?

(*b*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) in certain cases judgments had been delivered over the signature of the Secretary and not of the Member, Board of Revenue; and

(*ii*) the Member, Board of Revenue, seldom attends his office or court room for hearing petitioners?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of laying down some code of procedure for the conduct of the proceedings before the Revenue Court or the Board of Revenue?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) A statement is laid on the Table.

(*b*) No.

(*c*) Chapter IV of the Practice and Procedure Manual, 1940, does provide the procedure for the conduct of proceedings before Revenue Courts (including the Board of Revenue).

Statement referred to in reply to clauses (a) (i) to (iii) of unstarred question No. 29.

	1940-41.	1941-42.	1942-43.	1943-44 (April to July).
(*a*) (*i*) ..	207	212	175	51
(*ii*) ..	58	24	22	5
(*iii*) ..	126	151	136	38

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, it is noticed with reference to the answer given in the statement showing that for the last three years out of 207, 212 and 175, and in 1943-44, 51 cases filed before the Board of Revenue only 58, 24, 22 and 5 respectively were given hearing and the others 126, 151, 136 and 38 were rejected without being given a hearing. May we know the reason for such a very large rejection and a very few cases being admitted by the Board?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there is any procedure as the Code of Civil Procedure for civil court cases which enables litigants or petitioners to have protection under the code when they appear before the Board of Revenue with their revision petition or appeal cases?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I have nothing further to add.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that at the present moment in addition to revenue cases there are a large number of petition cases going up to the Board of Revenue due to the new enactments of commercial sales tax and other measures which lead to accumulation of some kind of revenue cases in the files of the Board of Revenue?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The answer is in the affirmative.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answer (*b*) "No", will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that in one case at least which was specifically brought to his notice by the questioner, the order of the Board of Revenue was supposed to have been issued over the signature of Mr. Bastin, the then Secretary of the Board of Revenue?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That was done probably through mistake.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My question was "Yes" or "no".

Mr. SPEAKER: He has answered that it was probably through mistake.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Probably that is a mistake is not an answer.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is quite enough.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answer (*b*)(*ii*) "No", will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state as to how many days in the week or how many hours in the week he has been seen attending court or he has been keeping record of his attendance at court during the last three months or six months or whatever period may be available to the Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: There is no separate court from office and for further details I want notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he attends office at all?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Yes.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he holds the office in the Writers' Buildings or in his residence?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Writers' Buildings.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister kindly tell us under what rule or provision of the Practice and Procedure Manual or of any Manual whatsoever, the Member of the Board of Revenue rejected 60 per cent. to 70 per cent. of the cases filed without hearing the parties or their lawyers?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the abnormal percentage of summary rejection by the Member of the Board of Revenue, will Government consider the desirability of amending the Practice and Procedure Manual as regards summary rejection by the Member, Board of Revenue?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: These cases are a part of the judicial proceedings and it is for the trying judge to decide what cases should be rejected or not.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Does Government consider the desirability of amending the rule for summary rejection by the Member, Board of Revenue, without hearing the parties?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is for the trial court to decide.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that in addition to the number of cases quoted in *(a)(i)*, there were also a large number of review cases or petitions, as they are called, which are not shown in these figures and if those figures were included the percentage of rejection would come up to nearly 95 per cent. or more?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Government of India Act provided for making rules of procedure for conduct of the Board of Revenue and has Government in the light of that prepared any rules or is considering the desirability of amending the rules to make it possible for people to get justice at the hands of the Board of Revenue?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The matter will receive Government's consideration.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of a very large number of rejections by way of summary trial, does the Hon'ble Minister think it desirable to enact any law enabling parties to go to the High Court as in the case of income-tax cases by way of reference to the Hon'ble High Court?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not in a position to express any opinion now.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how petitions are received by the Board of Revenue—are they received by the Member in the court as motions are made in the High Court or are they received by a clerk sitting in the office who receives it on behalf of the Board as the *peshkar* does in other cases?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware of the procedure.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that rejection or acceptance depends on the sweet note, which also arises out of some other consideration, which emanates from the *peshkar* or the clerk in the office and it is dependant entirely on some method other than what the legal brain can manufacture?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether the Board of Revenue is to be considered or is actually considered by Government as a court of law?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Yes, so far as petitions are concerned.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government has taken any competent legal opinion to find out whether Government is in a position to intervene when justice is openly not obtained by the Board of Revenue because of the presence of certain rules at the present moment?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No.

Construction of embankments on the southern part of Khulna.

30. Mr. PATIRAM ROY: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware that—

(*i*) a conference was held at Khulna under the presidency of the Hon'ble Sir B. P. Singh Roy, Kt., the then Revenue Minister, in the year 1940, to devise ways and means to construct bunds and embankments to protect the crop fields of the southern part of the Khulna district against saline water;

(*ii*) a resolution was adopted at the said conference to organise District and Subdivisional Committees to inquire about the embankments; and

(*iii*) the proposed Committees were formed and reports were also submitted by them?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps, if any, Government have taken to give effect to the reports?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is also aware that the embankments and *bunds* are indispensable to protect the paddy lands in the southern portion of Bengal against the saline water?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of expediting the construction and repairing of the embankments?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) to (*d*) The matter is under enquiry.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to (*a*) (*iii*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when those committees were formed and when the reports were received?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: I want notice.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

63—Extraordinary Charges in India.

(When the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin rose to speak.)

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. We find the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies not in the House. This demand although technically belongs to the portfolio of the Hon'ble Chief Minister contains a number of items which come under the purview of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies. May we, Sir, through you request Government to see that no further disrespect to this House is shown by that particular Minister and he may be pleased to attend and give an explanation on matters raised in this House?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I would like to draw your attention that until a motion is moved we do not know which motion the Opposition is going to take up. There is also the question that the thing has to be moved and it is a Parliamentary practice for Ministers to come to the Chamber as soon as their subject is taken up. So, I do not think that there is any question of disrespect on this occasion or on any previous occasion, and I say this with a great deal of emphasis that as far as the Minister of Civil Supplies is concerned no question of disrespect to this House has arisen before this.

Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,44,34,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India".

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, with your permission Mr. J. C. Gupta will move the motion on my behalf.

Mr. SPEAKER: All right.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission I move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) maladministration of the Civil Supplies Department and of the various offices connected therewith leading to corruption and bribery;

(*ii*) the absence of any comprehensive policy to maintain the food supply of all classes of the people of Bengal.

(*iii*) the absence of any proper plan for the equitable distribution of foodgrains and other essentials like cloth, sugar, coke and kerosene to urban and rural population of all classes;

(*iv*) failure to reveal the results of the food-drive, subdivision by subdivision in the muffasil, and ward by ward in Calcutta and Howrah areas;

(*v*) failure to enlist proper type of persons in the village food Committees;

(*vi*) failure to check the unprecedented rise in prices of foodstuff and the sufferings of the people as a result thereof;

(*vii*) failure to put into effect at an early date a revised scheme for the organisation of Home Guards in the province with the approval and blessings of the leaders of public opinion belonging to all parties; and

(*viii*) administration of the Cotton Cloth and Yarn (Control) Order.

I want to emphasize the question of maladministration. Sir, it is necessary, if this discussion is to be real, that the Minister who is in charge of the Civil Supplies Department should be here because otherwise if the Minister has decided not to be here and listen——

Mr. SPEAKER: He will be coming shortly.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. If the Minister who moves the demand is present in the House, has any member the right to demand the presence of any other Minister than the one who is putting forward the demand?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think technically it is not necessary, but here the subjects are inter-related, and therefore it is desirable—it is better that the Minister who is actually in charge of Civil Supplies which will be discussed here should also be present.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, a thing may be desirable, but a thing cannot be demanded under the rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have made my position quite clear.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: We demand what is desirable and not what is undesirable.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: My friend Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi thinks my demand that the Minister who is in charge of the Civil Supplies Department should be here to listen to what suggestions we may give, what facts of maladministration in his department we may bring to notice, as an unreasonable demand. May I, Sir, through you tell my friend representing the Muslim Chamber of Commerce that we regard it as of the utmost importance that the Minister in charge who is daily looking after or supposed to be looking after this Department is present in the House? I will stand corrected and not insist if the Minister is unable to get things done in his Department due to certain exigencies, but we take it that the Minister in charge of Civil Supplies is responsible in the real sense of the term, is responsible in the sense in which Sir Nazimuddin took the responsibility regarding the detenu question. We expect that he is also responsible in the same way. If so, his presence is absolutely necessary for the purpose of discussing this motion that I have tabled.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of order, Sir. Is the responsibility of the Ministry in this province joint and several or several?

Mr. SPEAKER: How does that question arise?

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Sir, it arises out of your ruling given just now that it is not necessary for the Minister concerned to be present technically to listen to the speeches from the Opposition benches. Therefore, the point of order which I raise is this: is the responsibility of the Ministry under the Crown in this province joint and several, joint or several, or several.

Mr. SPEAKER: When this demand is being discussed, I am afraid that question need not be discussed and no information on that point is necessary, because the Hon'ble Sir Nazimuddin who has put forward the demand is present here to give you all possible information or replies.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: May I make an enquiry of the Chief Minister through you whether the Chief Minister will be able to answer all the questions arising out of the department of the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies?

(At this stage, the Hon'ble Mr Suhrawardy entered the Chamber.)

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: He is here, he is here.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Whether he comes here or not is another matter. I am asking the Chief Minister through you whether he is in a position to answer all the questions with reference to the Department ministered by the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Banerjee, I would ask you to consider for yourself whether such a question at this stage will be fair, because until you have made your speeches, it is not known what answer is to be given. Therefore, the Hon'ble the Chief Minister, I am afraid. is not in a position to say anything at this stage.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: I am glad to have the reply of the Chief Minister through you, Sir.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: I am much obliged to the Hon'ble Food Minister, I mean the Minister for Civil Supplies for kindly coming to the Hall to hear me. (Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: He looks so fresh!)

Sir, the first thing that I want to tell him is this that the Civil Supplies Department in actual operation has resulted in being a Civil Non-Supply Department. (Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Uncivil Non-Supply Department.) (Laughter.) I do not know whether the Civil Supplies Department is doing its duties regarding military supply, but let it be very clearly known to the Minister in charge and to all concerned that the public of Bengal feel that this department for the reorganisation of which Rs. 31 lakhs has been provided is, so far as supply to the civil population of Bengal is concerned, nothing more than a non-supply department. The reason why I strongly emphasise this point is this. If what we hear has some basis of truth behind it, there is a tug-of-war as to whether the Civil Supplies Department should be manned by the members of the Indian Civil Service, or people from other Services however competent, however willing, should have a look in that department; this is one of the things which has troubled that department most and then again whether the white Civil Service officers or the brown Civil Service officers would be able to handle the question better is another thing that is given very great importance in that department.

Sir, when it is the question of supply, it stands to commonsense and reason that those who are in trade, those who are in business, those who have been dealing in those commodities are the best persons to advise. But unfortunately what we have found is this: Ignoring the persons who are most competent to advise as to where stock is available, how purchases are to be made, and how these things should be more speedily transported into the province, we know the officers in that department sit together amidst a heap of files and I understand they are busy from morning till late in the evening to go back home not being able to understand what they have actually got to do. I do not think, whether they are members of the Indian Civil Service of the purest steel-frame or of Indian origin, they can in one day develop into experts regarding the purchase and regarding the transport of various commodities into the province speedily. The sooner they will give up their isolationism from the actual men in the trade, the sooner this department will give up their *subjanta* habit, the better for all concerned.

Then, Sir, I understand they are considering the question of rationing. I can say without any fear of contradiction that a big comprehensive scheme of rationing can never be successful without voluntary co-operation and aid.

They may advertise for retired Government servants to come and join and take up posts on a salary which will equal to what they formerly used to get but for the purpose of carrying out rationing these are not the persons who would be able to cope with the colossal task before them.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: They should be sent to the *pinjrapole* instead.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Therefore whatever the Civil Supplies Department is doing the public of Bengal feel that only two questions need to be tackled by them. One is to get as much supplies to this province as is possible and then to distribute that quantity all over the province equitably. The poor and the rich should be given equal rations which are sufficient for the purpose of subsistence; otherwise it is no use spending hours and hours together in that department appointing as many members of the Civil Service and of the Provincial Service as possible and stop there. Rs. 31 lakhs has been put down for the organisation. Many more sums will be spent without any actual good to the population of Bengal. I therefore submit that in the reorganisation of the Civil Supplies Department, if they want to make new appointments and to maintain communal proportion in those appointments, they will never succeed. They will only succeed in arranging for the supply if they win the co-operation and confidence of the men in the trade. They will only be able to effect an equitable and fair distribution if they can enlist the willing co-operation more of the volunteers than those people who will go there to earn their monthly wages. Sir, I do not want to give any certificate in advance. But it seems that in handling *atta* and flour they have taken the co-operation of the association of dealers and of course the time is not yet to pass any judgment. The organisation has been made quickly and there has been a much better and more satisfactory distribution.

Now my friend, Mr. Suhrawardy, made a statement yesterday that he had been to the Jagu Babu's Bazar where 100 shops were being supplied with rice. I did not go but I have the authority of two Barrister friends of mine who had themselves gone to the Lansdown market and to Jagu Babu's Bazar that they could not get any supply on the day on which Mr. Suhrawardy saw that supplies were there. Again regarding the arrangements about controlled shops and the stuff that is distributed through the controlled shops without ration cards the controlled shops are used by people for the purpose of collecting rice and foodgrains to be sold in the black market. Sir, in the controlled shops this is the kind of rice that is sold (showed the sample to the House). (A voice: Is it rice?)

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Send it round for all to see.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: There will be a lot of these things in Mr. Ispahani's godown because Mr. Ispahani must know to his disadvantage that having gone into this rice business without previous experience his men have not turned over the bags of rice as many times as it is necessary with the result that things have come to this state and that has happened with regard to much of the purchase by Government. If

these purchases were through businessmen who knew it they would have told Government officers: "Don't keep the bags that way, stack the things this way. If you don't two months after you will find all these things have deteriorated". We want the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies to let us know how much of stock purchased with Government money has gone absolutely waste. I know even last year the stocks that were purchased by Government when there was a pressure for distribution were given out and those were uneatable and unusable things. So this is what is happening. Crores and crores of money we are called upon to sanction. We are sanctioning that amount. With that money without proper consideration as to who are the persons and who are the parties and what should be the method of purchase, transport and storing Government is buying them recklessly with the result that we are having losses. I want the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies to take this House into his confidence and to say how much of this Rs. 250 lakhs loss on the sale of foodstuffs is accounted for by waste of foodstuffs, by the foodstuffs having got rotten and having been thrown away. That is an important point which I want the Hon'ble Minister to answer.

I may submit for his consideration, if he has the actual control of the department, if he has not been overruled by some other forces over which he has no control, not to increase the cost of establishment but have a consultation with the men who are in the trade. I know you will say that men in the trade who only look to their profits would not be of help. Take their advice, all of them are not scoundrels. You can set one scoundrel against another in the trade and then get everything you want. Put your officers on the track to see that these people do not rob you, do not rob the consumers and do not rob the Government. But if isolated from them you try to do it, you shall have to go and take your training about nationalisation in Russia before you succeed. There is no half measure, either cent. per cent. nationalisation or Government agency. There is no other measure than cent. per cent. nationalisation by Government eliminating the trade, or you will have to take the help of the persons who are actually engaged in the trade and see that their unusual greed for profit is checked by these persons. But if ignoring that you want to promulgate policies, you want to carry on purchases in business, you will only land this province into difficulty and bigger and larger debts by your work.

(At this time the member reached the time-limit.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Gupta, your time is up.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Sir, I do not think I will take long. Other matters will be discussed on the Food day and therefore I will not touch upon them: I will touch only upon the maladministration of this department.

Then, Sir, I want the Hon'ble Minister to consider another thing. The air is thick with reports, not merely rumours, of corruption. Sir, I had occasion to come to know as to how things are done in the Civil Supplies Department. The traders cannot possibly get a permit, they cannot possibly

get an order to get delivery of their goods before they have spent at least Rs. 1-8 or Rs. 2 per maund before they can go and get delivery. But, Sir, who has got to pay? All these things are to be put on the shoulders of the consumers. Why cannot the department be manned by such people who will look to the interest of the public; just as in a bank when persons go there they are paid out and their interests looked into, just as in business premises they are attended to—why cannot that system be introduced there? If you go to the Civil Supply Department you will find the officer in a room, any number of orderlies moving about, any number of *dalals* loitering, and you will have to ask this clerk and that clerk every one of whom will say—go to him. In this way the whole thing is moving in a vicious circle. Nothing is done there. I see there is a demand for expenditure on the reorganisation of the Civil Supplies Department. But, Sir, before this House votes on it they have the right to know what is the actual reorganisation that is necessary. Will that reorganisation lead to more and more appointments, more and more men to count before they get an order, before they get any supply arranged? Or is it for the purpose of helping the supply, co-ordinating the supply and speeding up an usual delay that there is in this department?

Sir, I will not detain the House any longer. I will only assure the Civil Supply Minister through you, Sir, that I am not urging this from political motive. He knows it very well that I have never hankered for Ministership or to adorn the Treasury Benches. So when I am making this criticism it is not for the purpose of displacing these people from there but in the interest of the people of Bengal who are suffering and suffering very badly. They see in the streets only some of the beggars and the lower class destitutes, but the untold sufferings, the unbearable sufferings of the lower middle class are only known to those who go round, and after hearing the story of their sufferings they feel what a mockery it is that they are supposed to be members of the Assembly, they are supposed to be able to influence the conduct of the Government, how helpless they are. I do very earnestly want the Hon'ble Minister to apply his mind to these things. If he feels that as an Indian he is unable to do what should be done to Indians, let him frankly say that. I do not want to deprive him of his Ministerial position, but I would appeal to him—let him take up other works, and those people who ought to be responsible for this state of things take the responsibility and shoulder that responsibility.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name, namely——

Mr. SPEAKER: Before you move the motion I have got to say one thing. I find that your motion is to raise a discussion about mismanagement, chaos and total failure and bungling—but bungling of what?

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Of the Civil Supplies Department.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then you should amend your motion accordingly and then move.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: All right, Sir.

Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of the motion is to raise a discussion about mismanagement, chaos and total failure and bungling of the Civil Supplies Department.

আপনাদের এই Civil Supply Departmentকে শ্রীযুক্ত যোগেশ গুপ্ত মহাশয় বলেছেন Civil Non-supply Department. আমি তাঁর সেই কথাটিই সংশোধন করে বলতে চাই যে সেটি শুধু যে Civil Non-supply Department, তা নয়, সেটি Criminal Non-supply Department হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। কি রকম? প্রথমত: এই যে Civil Supply Departmentএর প্রধান উদ্দেশ্য ছিল যেখানে জিনিষ পাওয়া যায় না সেখানে যাতে লোকে জিনিষ পেতে পারে তার ব্যবস্থা করা। বিশেষত: কয়েকটি জিনিষ নিয়েই প্রথমে বাংলাদেশে নানা প্রকারের অসুবিধার সৃষ্টি হয়। প্রথমত: জাপান যুদ্ধ ঘোষণা করার পর কেরোসিন তেল নিয়ে গ্রামগুলির বিশেষভাবে অসুবিধার সৃষ্টি হয়। তারপর গ্রামে গ্রামে Civil Supplies Department চাল কিনতো। যদিচ নিয়মানুগভাবে তখন পর্য্যন্ত এই departmentএর সৃষ্টি হয়নি কিন্তু সৃষ্টির পূর্ব্বেই Governmentএর তরফ থেকে যখন বাংলার সর্ব্বত্র চাল কেনা সুরু হোলো সেই চাল কেনার সময় একটা মস্ত বড় ওজুহাত দেখানো হয়েছিল যে এই চাল যদি জাপান আক্রমণ করে তবে সরিয়ে ফেলা হবে, অথবা যদি কোন জেলা বিপন্ন হয়ে পড়ে তাহলে সেই জেলার সাহায্য করা হবে। আমরা দেখতে পেলাম যে এই যে কোটি কোটি টাকার চাল কেনা হোলো যখন বিপদ এসেছে তখন সে চাল যে কোথায় গেল তার হিসাব আজ পর্য্যন্ত আমরা department থেকে পরিষ্কাররূপে জানতে পারলাম না। বরঞ্চ দিনের পর দিন যতই যেতে লাগলো ততই আমরা দেখছি যে এ department মারফৎ যত চাল যাচ্ছে ততই এই departmentএর মন্ত্রী মহাশয় ঘোষণা করছেন যে যতকিছু দেশের অভাব-অভিযোগ, যতকিছু দেশের দুঃখ, সেজন্য দায়ী হচ্চেন এই স্বার্থপরব্যবসায়ীর দল। কিন্তু আমরা চোখের সামনে দেখছি যে এই department এবং ব্যবসায়ী, যারা চোরা বাজারে মাল বিক্রী করে লোকদের বিপদ আরো বাড়িয়ে তুলেছে, তারা গলাগলি বন্ধুভাবে চলাফেরা করছে এবং একে অপরকে দিব্যি সাহায্য করে পরস্পরে বিত্তস্থ এবং লাভবান হয়ে উঠছে। সে তত্ত্ব এই departmentএর যিনি প্রধান এবং departmentএ যাঁরা আছেন তাঁরা অতি ব্যক্তিগতভাবে অবগত আছেন। আমি মাত্র দু'একটি উদাহরণ দেখাচ্ছি। এই Civil Supplies Department থেকে কোন কোন মহাজনের কাছে তাঁরা licence দিয়ে সমস্ত জিনিষ দেয়। সেই সব মহাজনের কাছে জিনিষ চাইলে জিনিষ পাওয়া যায় না সোজাসুজিভাবে। কিন্তু যদি তাদের কাছে অন্যভাবে সেই জিনিষ চাওয়া যায় তাহলে পিছন দুয়ার দিয়ে তাদের কাছ থেকে সব জিনিষই পাওয়া যায়। এবং যদি এই কথা সেই departmentএর যাঁরা ভারপ্রাপ্ত কর্ম্মচারী আছেন—প্রত্যেক জেলায় জেলায় Supply Officers আছেন—তাঁদের যদি গোচরে আনা যায় তাহলে তাঁরা চুপ করে থাকেন, অথবা ধমকিয়ে দেন যে প্রমাণ নিয়ে এসো। বাজারে জিনিষ পাওয়া যায় না; তারা অন্য লোকের নামে জিনিষ আগে থেকেই বিক্রী হয়েছে বলে লিখে দেয়; আবার পিছন থেকে তারা জিনিষ দিচ্ছে। Supply Officer বা যে সমস্ত Officer সে সম্বন্ধে ঘনিষ্ঠভাবে জড়িত তাদের কাছে বলেও কোন লাভ নাই। যারা জিনিষ বেশী দামে বিক্রী করছে তারা বুক ফুলিয়ে বলছে যে যাও, যাও, গিয়ে বল কি করতে পারো? তার কারণ

কি? ইতিমধ্যেই departmentএর যে সমস্ত কর্ম্মচারী তাদের সঙ্গে বন্দোবস্ত করে রেখেছে। এই গেল একটা দিক। আর একটা দিক হচ্চে এই ration সম্বন্ধে। জেলায় জেলায়, আমি জানি বিশেষতঃ বরিশাল জেলায়, Magistrate, তিনি সেখানকার ব্যবসায়ীদের প্রতিনিধি এবং স্থানীয় প্রতিনিধি নিয়ে একটা Committee গঠন করেছেন যে, যারা বাস্তবিক বিপন্ন তাদের ration card দেওয়া; এবং এইভাবে কিছু কিছু ration cardএর ব্যবস্থা প্রত্যেক সহরে সহরে, বরিশালে, করা হয়েছে এবং অন্যান্য জেলায়ও অনুরূপ ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছে। এখন এই ration card যখন issue করা হয় তখন এই Committee থেকে যাদের নাম দেওয়া হয় তারা সকলেই ration card পায় না, অথচ বহু লোক ration card পায় যাদের Committee কোন নাম দেয়নি। এবং আমি পূর্ব্বেই বলেছি যে এই ration cardএ অনেক সময় দেখা যায় যে এমন সমস্ত লোকের নামে issue হয়েছে যারা সেই Supply Departmentএর যারা বাবু অথবা সেই Government যাঁরা পরিচালনা করেন, তাঁদের আত্মীয়-স্বজন, চাকর-বাকর প্রভৃতি। তাদের নামে বহু ration card issue হয়ে থাকে। ফলে এই Civil Supply Department যারা বাস্তবিক অভাবগ্রস্ত তাদের supply না করে যাদের অভাব নাই অথবা যারা সেই অভাবগ্রস্তদের নামে card issue করে তারা নিজেরাই পরোক্ষভাবে সেই দ্রব্য লাভ করার সমস্ত সুযোগ নিয়ে নিচ্চে।

আমি পূর্ব্বের বক্তৃতায় দেখিয়েছিলাম যে আমাদের বরিশালের A. D. M. তার নিজের চাকরের নামে খালি ration card করে করে নিচ্চে। আজ আমার কাছে চিঠি এসেছে বরিশাল থেকে, ঠিক তাদের প্রকৃত নাম দিয়ে যে কার কার নামে ration card হয়েছে। ১ নং 356, নাজিম আলি সিকদার, A. D. M.'s cook; ২ নং 357, আরুব জান বিবি, c/o A. D. M.'s cook; 358, যবিণা খাতুন, daughter of A. D. M.'s cook.; 359, Abdul Rauf, c/o A. D. M.'s cook. এই বরিশাল জেলার A D M.—তাঁরcookএর নামেই চারখানা card issue হয়েছে।

এই চিঠি এসেছে কার কাছ থেকে তা বলছি,—ঐ Ration Card Committee'র একজন memberএর কাছ থেকে এসেছে। কাজেই এর মধ্যে যে কোন ভুল আছে তা কেউ বলতে পারবেন না। কারণ তিনি non-official member; তিনি এই চিঠি লিখেছেন যে তাঁরা card issue করা সত্ত্বেও এই card issue করেছেন। (A VOICE: তিনি কে?) সে নামটাম আমি জানি না, বোধ হয় আবদুল হালিম চৌধুরী: আমি নাম ঠিক বলতে পারি না। যাই হোক এই রকম হয়েছে। আমার কাছে অভিযোগ এসেছে স্থানীয় Relief Committee'র কাছ থেকে যে ভোলায় A D. M. তিনি চাকর-বাকরের নামে ১৪ খানা card issue করেছেন। এখনও Supply Departmentএর ভেতর এ হয়! বরিশালের districtএ—(A VOICE: কি নাম?) ঐ ত বলেছি আমি পুরা নাম জানি না, সহরে তাকে "হালিম চাচা" বলে। এখন এইভাবে যদি card issue হয় তাহলে বাস্তবিকপক্ষে বিপদাপন্ন জনসাধারণ তারা কি পায়। এবং প্রথমতঃ খুব অল্প সংখ্যক লোককেই ration card দেওয়া হয়; যত লোকের পাওয়া উচিত তার চেয়ে বহু কম লোক পায় তার মধ্যে। Supply অতিশয় অপ্রচুর। হয়ত এখানে মন্ত্রী মহাশয় বলবেন যে যেমন আমরা যোগাড় করতে পারবো তেমনি তো বণ্টন করবো; পাই না কি করবো? আমি তার সঙ্গে সম্পূর্ণ সহানুভূতি করতে রাজি আছি। কিন্তু যেভাবে বণ্টন করা হচ্চে সেটা অত্যন্ত দোষাবহ। আমি আর একটা জিনিষ বলতে চাচ্ছি: এই ব্যবসায়ীদের কাছে জিনিষপত্র বিক্রী করতে দেওয়া হয়, কিন্তু যে

সমস্ত Relief Committee হয়েছে তাদের থেকে যখন Supply Officerএর কাছে চাওয়া হয় যে আমাদের আটা, চাল এই সব জিনিষ supply কর আমরা তোমাদের টাকা দিচ্ছি, আমরা গরীবদের মধ্যে বিনালাভে অল্প মূল্যে বিতরণ করবো এবং যে টাকা কম পড়বে সেটা আমরা Relief Committee থেকে দেবো, তখন এই বলে চিঠি লিখে হায়রাণ হচ্চে, কিন্তু তাদের supply করা হচ্চে না। কেন হচ্চে না তার প্রধান কারণ অনুমান করতে বোধ হয় দেরী লাগে না; কারণ Relief Committee ত পেলা দিতে পারবে না, সেই জন্য। আমাদের গ্রামের Relief Committee'র পক্ষ থেকে আমি নিজে ২ খানা চিঠি লিখেছি; আজ পর্য্যন্ত তার জবাবও আসে নি, দেওয়ারও বন্দোবস্ত হয় নি; যে গরীব-কাঙ্গালকে আমরা অল্প মূল্যে জিনিষ দিতে পারবো সে সুযোগটুকু পর্য্যন্ত আমাদের দেওয়া হচ্চে না। আমি মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি এদিকে যে তিনি বাস্তবিক যদি চান যে গরীব-কাঙ্গাল এরা সুযোগ পায়, তাহলে Relief Committee যখন চাইবে তাদের দাবী সর্ব্বাগ্রে পূরণ হওয়া উচিত, অন্ততঃ এই উপদেশটা বিশেষ জোরের সঙ্গে তিনি দেবেন এঁদের। এখন এইভাবে একদিকে supply চলছে। কেরোসিন তেল প্রভৃতি সে ত পাওয়াই যায় না। আমি জানি বরিশাল জেলায়, আমি যখন রওয়ানা হয়ে আসি, তিন সপ্তাহ পর্য্যন্ত কোথাও কেরোসিন তেল পাওয়া যায় নি। এবং এই কেরোসিন তেল যখন পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না তখন যে সমস্ত agency আছেন ঐ Supply Officer এর দ্বারা অনুমোদিত, সেই সমস্ত agency কিন্তু গোপনে পাচ্ছেন, তখনও কেরোসিন তেল বিক্রী করছে। একথা Supply Officerদের নজরে আনলেও কিছু হয় না। যদি এইভাবে সরবরাহ করা হয় তাহলে জনসাধারণ কি এই বিশ্বাস করবে না যে এই agency'র সঙ্গে supply officeএর কর্ম্মচারীদের যোগাযোগ আছে? আর একটি বিষয়—সেটি হচ্চে যে Government জনসাধারণকে, এমন কি যাঁরা M. L. A. তাঁদেরও ডেকে জিজ্ঞাসা করেন না যে আমরা যে সব বন্দোবস্ত করছি সহরে অথবা মহকুমায়, তোমরা এসে তাহাতে আমাদের সঙ্গে সহযোগিতা কর, এবং কিভাবে ভাল হতে পারে তার পরামর্শ দাও। এখন পর্য্যন্ত তা করেন নি। এখন আমি জানিয়ে দিতে চাই যে জনসাধারণের যারা প্রতিনিধি এই বর্ত্তমানে যে দুর্ভিক্ষ চলছে তাতে জনসাধারণকে বাঁচাবার জন্য আমরা সকলেই সর্ব্বান্তঃকরণে সহযোগিতা করতে চাই Government এর সঙ্গে। মাত্র আমরা এইটুক চাই যে Governmentএর কর্ম্মচারীরা যেন জনসাধারণের প্রতিনিধিদের সহযোগিতা নেয় এবং তারা যেন সেইভাবে কার্য্য পরিচালনা ক'রে যাতে অসাধুতা এবং নানা প্রকারের অন্যায় অত্যাচার গোচরীভূত করা হলে, যেন তারা উড়িয়ে না দিয়ে, এক পাশে সরিয়ে না দিয়ে, তার যাতে প্রতিকার হয় সেজন্য যত্নশীল থাকেন।

তারপরে এই যে সমস্ত gruel kitchen নানা জায়গায় খোলা হয়েছে তার সংখ্যা অতি অপ্রচুর। আমি জানি বরিশালে ১৫০টি মাত্র gruel kitchen খোলা হয়েছে। সেখানে গ্রামের সংখ্যা হচ্চে ৭ হাজার। এখন এই ৭ হাজার গ্রামে এই ১৫০ gruel kitchen; তার দ্বারা এই বিপদাপন্ন জনসাধারণের কতখানি উপকার হতে পারে তা বুঝতে পারছি না। তার ফলে সহরে আসছে হাজার হাজার লোক। এই কলকাতা সহরে আমি কয়েকদিন পর্য্যন্ত ঘুরে ঘুরে যারা এসেছে তাদের অবস্থা দেখেছি। এই যতজন কলকাতা সহরে এসেছে তারা প্রায় সকলেই গ্রাম থেকে এসেছে। এরা আর কেউ গ্রামে ফিরে যাবে না। (Time limit) ২।৩ মিনিটের মধ্যে এই কথাটি শেষ করে আমি বসছি। আর কেউ গ্রামে যাবে

না ; তার ২টো কারণ : একটা কারণ হচ্চে এই যে ঠাণ্ডা লাগছে তাতে অসুখ বিসুখ হয়ে তারা মারা যাবে ; পেটের অসুখ হয়েও মারা যাবে। দ্বিতীয় কারণ, এরা ভিক্ষুকবৃত্তিতে অভ্যস্ত হয়ে আর গৃহস্থ হয়ে খেটে খেতে চাবে না, সহরে বসে ভিক্ষা করবে। তাই আমার মনে হয় এই যে ঘর ছেড়েছে তারা আর ঘর নেবে না। আর দেখি যে ছোট ছোট ছেলে, যাদের আমরা হিন্দু সভায় নিয়ে যাচ্ছি, তারা ২ দিন পরে পালিয়ে আসছে। নানা প্রকার কষ্ট স্বীকার করেও রাস্তায় রাস্তায় ঘুরে খাবে উশৃঙ্খলাভাবে। শৃঙ্খলার সহিত থাকার অভ্যাস তারা হারিয়ে ফেলেছে। আমি মন্ত্রী মহাশয়কে বলতে চাই যে এই সমস্ত লোক কোথায় কোন গ্রাম থেকে আসছে তার হিসাব নিয়ে সেই সেই গ্রামে gruel kitchen খুলে তাদের গ্রামে যদি পাঠিয়ে না দেওয়া যায় তাহলে যারা উপযুক্ত নাগরিক ছিল, ভবিষ্যতে তাদের নিজেদের জীবন এবং পরিবারের জীবন যেমন নষ্ট হবে, তেমনি সমস্ত বাংলাদেশে একদল vagabond সৃষ্টি হয়ে ভবিষ্যৎ একেবারে নষ্ট করে দেবে।

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Banerjee, I think it will be better if you move all the three motions standing in your name?

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Yes, Sir, with your permission I shall move all the motions standing in my name. I beg to move first of all that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the policy underlying the loss on sale of subsidised food and the failure of the Government in tackling the problem of food supply.

I also beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the expansion of the Home Guard Organisation.

I further beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the policy relating to the reorganisation of the Department of Civil Supplies.

Sir, in February, 1943, when my esteemed friend Mr. Fazlul Huq, the then Chief Minister, introduced his budget, my honourable friend—Mr. Suhrawardy as he then was—criticised his budget by saying that it was nothing but a scrap of paper. I do not know how to characterise the paper which has been placed before us now and which has been termed as a "budget". What is its colour? What is its character? (The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: You gave the character.) The character has not been given by us, my honourable freind Mr. Mandal. It is your offspring. On the last occasion, when I had the privilege of listening to the speech of my honourable friend, the Minister for Civil Supplies, he was very proud of his enunciation of what he characterised "a clear-cut policy preventing further speculation in prices". That "clear-cut policy" has indeed prevented further rise in prices of the commodities! (Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: How?) You will ask your Hon'ble Minister. But I have noticed this that prior to the meeting of the first session of the Legislature

under the present Ministry when my honourable friend was delivering his speeches and making searches under *taktaposhes*, every day he delivered a speech the prices of the commodities had an upward tendency towards rise.

Secondly, Sir, my honourable friend dealt with the question of hoarding and he introduced a "great drive". The great drive took place in this province between the 7th and the 20th June, 1943, and my honourable friend was very glad about the statistics which he had collected and said that he had been able to unearth 7 to 8 million maunds. My honourable friend does not realise the distinction between rice and paddy. I put to him the question whether this quantity was in rice or in paddy, but my honourable friend did not condescend to vouchsafe any reply. He is a member of the English Bar; he naturally does not understand the distinction between rice and paddy. (The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: Because he is your colleague!)

Now, Sir, what has happened to the 7 to 8 million maunds discovered? Have they disappeared? If so, where? With fanfare, we got a holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act in Calcutta and Greater Calcutta. That was on the 6th August, 1943, i.e., more than six weeks after the food drive ceremony in the province had been over, and for administrative reasons so I gathered my honourable friend could not have a simultaneous food drive. Well, the administrative reasons were somehow solved and a food drive undertaken. What is the result of the food drive? Shall we get figures from my honourable friend, so that we may get to know what are the requirements of the province, what are the requirements of Calcutta and Greater Calcutta, what stocks there are in hand, what are the Government purchases and what stocks Government has purchased and has kept in store? And then will come the question of equitable distribution. My honourable friend has collected most useful statistics he told us with the assistance I suppose of a lakh and a half of food committees. I hope that they have all been set up. In the budget I find a provision of Rs. 1,29,000 only for the purpose of meeting the allowances of these members of the food committees, but there is another provision in the budget for a sum of Rs. 18 lakhs on account of Home Guards organisation. My honourable friend the Finance Minister is absent today. I am sorry to hear he is ill. He has told us nothing about this paltry sum of Rs. 18 lakhs which will be spent on the Home Guards organisation. There is no scheme, and the Blue Book which gives us details of the budget is an interesting study this year. It represents *suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri*. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it blue or green?) Whether it is blue or green, it is immaterial. My honourable friend assured us that an oath of honesty and social service will be administered to each of the members of a lakh and 50 thousand of his food committees. I hope he has been able to administer the oath of honesty and social service to them—I will not say to members of the Cabinet. Caesar's wife is above suspicion, but what about the oath of honesty and social service administered to the members of his own department? Charges of bribery and corruption are absolutely rampant and everybody from the top to the bottom is taking bribes. When I make this statement, Sir, I do so

with a full sense of responsibility. (The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Talking bunkum!) My honourable friend to my right asks me to say whether there is any volunteer of the Muslim League who has been left unpaid in the matter of formation of Home Guards. That is a question in the fashion of questions which used to be put to us when we were in the Ministry by my honourable friend Mr. Suhrawardy and the Chief Minister of today. My honourable friend next stated that he had already built up small stocks all over the province and he gave us a picture of the millenium to come and rice was to be sold through controlled shops, at Rs. 9 per maund paddy, and Rs. 15 per maund rice. Sir, anybody who has anything to do with the province of Bengal will sympathise with the dreams of my honourable friend, the Minister for Civil Supplies. Dreams are not realities.

Next my honourable friend waxed very eloquent. His language is classical. He said, "We have been able to augment our supplies. Our agents Messrs. M. A. Ispahani, Ltd." (A voice from the Opposition: Unlimited!)—that philanthropic organisation with which we are very familiar in this province—"have succeeded in setting up an organisation that is in a position to shift foodgrains to Bengal". What prophecies? Prophecies are always risky; they are still more risky in politics. Sir, my honourable friend then urged for the augmentation of provincial resources and for resources from elsewhere. In this connection, my honourable friend has not replied to the categorical question put to him by my honourable friend Dr. Mookerjee as to the charge which the Food Minister in another province, who is not an aspirant for the throne here, has made against the Bengal Ministry. The Minister for Food, Sardar Baldev Singh, in the Punjab made this categorical statement: "The growers in the Punjab and the consumers in Bengal including members of the Opposition (unless they are rationed out) have every right to know where this difference goes and who pockets it." My honourable friend Dr. Mookerjee was a Finance Minister of this province. He made a rough calculation of Rs. 20 lakhs profit. The calculation ought to be Rs. 70 lakhs on 5 rupees per maund. The Punjab sent 50 thousand tons to Bengal. It is equivalent to 14 lakhs of maunds; Rs. 5 per maund is equal to Rs. 70 lakhs.

If this small sum of seventy lakhs has been pocketed by the Provincial Government then the budget would disclose it. If it has been pocketed by any philanthropic organisation, then of course the pocket will not disclose it. Then, Sir, I ought to tell you one thing more. This statement emerged from Lahore on the 15th of September. My honourable friend took the earliest precaution of bringing down the price of wheat at Rs. 12-12 per maund and the retail price of *atta* at 6 annas per seer on the 20th of September. This is very suspicious, at any rate it is not edifying.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Was it from 20th September?

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: If you look at the Gazette notification, it is dated Saturday, the 18th September, 1943.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: The press notification was much earlier.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Next we have the statement made by the Government of India. We have been so long told that the Government of India were not helping us. Now the statement of the Government of India is a revealing instrument. Sir, it says that from April 1st to 20th August, 1943, the total number of wagons in terms of 4 wheelers loaded with grains and pulses on the broad gauge railways amounted to 161,722 compared with 141,072 in the corresponding period of last year. This represents an increase of 14·6 per cent. On the metre gauge railways the increase was 4·79 per cent. According to the information received from Bengal Government and here my honourable friend cannot plead ignorance—foodgrains imported wholly on Government account from all sources amounted to 40,250 tons.

(At this stage the red light was lit.)

Sir, I should like to have five minutes more.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: This is about the Government of India, who are not shirking their responsibility.

Thirdly, to my intense amusement, I found the Railways putting in advertisements in the newspapers absolving themselves from all responsibility in the matter of transport. Sir, in this morning's (23rd September, 1943) newspaper, the advertisement which was issued by the Railways at their own cost—this was not done free—is to the following effect:—"Is the Railway transport to blame? Study these facts, tonnages arriving in Calcutta area by the East Indian Railway for six months from 1st January to 30th June in the past three years." The 1943 figures are 204,226 tons and then it says: "Have the breaches worsened the situation"? They say so, so that freaks of nature might not come to the rescue of the grandees who administer the affairs of the Government of Bengal. Look at these figures.

Average daily arrivals of foodgrains and foodstuffs by Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways.

	East Indian Railway.	Bengal Nagpur Railway.
For August, 1943—daily average number of wagons	138	..
Normal daily average	114	..
September 1st to September 12th (12 days)—daily average No. of wagons ..	206	28
Normal daily average	414	15

We have been told and told on the pontifical authority of the Hon'ble Minister that members of the Opposition, particularly Dr. Mookerjee, are making political capital out of the miseries of the people. The East Indian

Railway and the Bengal-Nagpur Railway are not political personalities and yet they take the trouble of absolving themselves from whatever responsibility that may be fixed upon them.

I had the privilege of listening to my honourable friend's second statement. It was a speech full of thanks. He did not remember only to offer thanks to Mr. Fazlul Huq, very unusual for the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies. Then, he gave us figures. All told he despatched to the mufassal only 6 lakhs of maunds of foodgrains. Where has the rest gone? We have been told that this is a "bottomless pit". Shall this bottomless pit be the bottomless pit of inequity and of incompetence? What shall it be? My honourable friend's third speech was still more revealing. He made a bold statement——

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: A bald statement!

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: I myself do not like the expression. I shall say he made a bold statement that he did not take into account whatever the needs of the mufassal. In his first statement he said that he was about to introduce rationing for Calcutta. My honourable friend promised rationing and now I find a press-note to the effect that rationing cannot be introduced in the near future because the census operations which took place under the ægis of my friend sometime ago require further revision. They must require further revision of course.

I find from the budget that on account of the Civil Supplies Department my honourable friends are asking for an increased grant of Rs. 34,22,000 on account of salaries and allowances of officers appointed, offices created and offices to be erected yet. Very good! That is not all. The budget is a revealing document. Sir, we have been told again on very good authority by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister himself that the Government have completed all arrangements for the purpose of securing an advance from the Imperial Bank of India to the extent of Rs. 16 crores for the purchase, remember, Sir, of 65 lakhs of maunds of *aus*. I know something about the Agriculture Department figures They are inaccurate. According to these figures the total area of the *aus* crop is 6 million acres. On an average yield of 8 maunds per acre, it gives you 480 lakhs of maunds. Out of this, Government are supposed to have bought 65 lakhs of maunds of *aus*. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Propose to.) My information is that out of Rs. 16 crores Rs. 4 crores have already been spent. A part of the proposal has been executed into action. Where is the evidence? Not merely that! The present budget shows that on account of last year's sale to the civil population as well as to the Government servants of rice, Government incurred a loss of Rs. 3½ crores. This amount has been debited. Shall I say unwisely debited to the revenue expenditure?

(At this stage again the red light was lit.)

Sir, I want five minutes more.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: My friend Mr. Suhrawardy does not like my speech.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: No, no. You are doing very well now.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Rupees 1,00 lakhs is the loss suffered by Government, so they say on account of subvention to Government employees. This is made up of three items: Rs. 20 lakhs loss on account of police, Rs. 30 lakhs loss on account of A.R.P. and Rs. 65 lakhs loss on account of all and sundry and yet this budget we are passing. We passed yesterday the demand under General Administration and today we are passing an additional sum of Rs. 15 lakhs for increased dearness allowance for whom we do not know? Not only that, my honourable friends have invented a new method. That new method consists in this—of having one head called "85A". That "85A" head is a very important head. It is a wise head and it is a head which is full of vitality. My honourable friend is asking for the following "advances": Rs. 10 crores for the purchase of rice, 7½ crores for the purchase of cloth, 1½ crores for the purchase of wheat and wheat products and 50 lakhs on account of salt. My honourable friend does not believe in the manufacture of salt in his home district—he does not believe that Midnapore is his own district——

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: But, suppose, I believe, but that would not give you salt from that district.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: This gives us exactly 19 crores plus 16 crores, that is, 35 crores, and the beautiful arrangement is that nothing is provided in the budget and whatever losses are incurred on this account will be adjusted at the close of the year and to the revenue account as in the present year——

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Potential department of a potential Minister!

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: And for that I wish to congratulate the future Finance Minister of this province in advance. Apart from this, Sir, I have been told that my honourable friend is creating all sorts of offices. My honourable friend has requisitioned the services of one Mr. Mackintosh White—he is Mackintosh no doubt he will cover all; and he is also white like my friend, Mr. Stark, but I do not like his designation. His designation is Transport and Procuration Officer. (Laughter.)

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Where do you get that?

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: The designation of this officer is Transport and Procuration Officer: I do not like him to be designated a procuration officer, although the French for their Advocate-General have used the expression "*Procureur Generale*".

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He does not know anything about rice. He is a Burma evacuee and knows nothing about Bengal and he has had nothing to do with transport business.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: No, no; you are mistaken.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, I know; a white man has been satisfied by this appointment.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Notwithstanding all the faults that the Ministers who have gone are supposed to have committed, they by their adjustment of the finances with the Centre, were satisfied with "poolable" and "non-poolable" items of expenditure. Non-poolable items of expenditure are those which we ourselves and our descendants from generation to generation in this province will have to shoulder and liquefy. My honourable friend, Mr. Goswami, has made one more addition and that is "special". We have heard of the expression "special" in connection with the Intelligence Department—whether this is "special" finance or not, I do not know: but I do agree with my honourable friend, the Finance Minister who has said very graphically—and this is about his own budget—"Nature and men seem to have conspired to inflict on the people of this province almost unbearable sufferings, in the mitigation of which we may have, from time to time, to violate the accepted canons of public finance with a view to the ultimate good." My honourable friend is not here: he is familiar with these violations: we are not: either the financial canons are good or they are bad: if they are bad, then this budget should be thrown out.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India", be reduced by Rs. 100 and in this connection I want to raise a discussion about the bribery and corruption in the Department of Civil Supplies.

I wish this Department of Civil Supplies did not exist at all. I hope I shall be voicing the opinion of the general public of Bengal when I say that Bengal would have been far better today without this Department of Civil Supplies. A year before there was practically no Department of Civil Supplies and then the people of Bengal could get their food at normal price. But since this department has been created and restrictions in the way of Ordinances and orders had been imposed with regard to the movement of foodgrains and also with regard to price, since then the trouble has arisen. I would ask Government again to think seriously whether this department should continue to exist or should be abolished forthwith. Sir, whatever I may say, I think this department will continue but what we want is that this department should be purged of bribery and corruption reigning rampant there. I ask with all seriousness why the prices were not controlled during the early harvest time last year. I had a scheme of price control which I submitted to the then Government. It was handed over to the Chief Minister of the time and he assured me that he would put up that scheme before the Cabinet, but he told us subsequently that though he had put up the scheme before the Cabinet the then Governor of the Province, Sir John Herbert, told Mr. Fazlul Huq that the Chief Minister should not interfere with Mr. Pinnell who should have his own way; so the scheme of price control was not given effect to. After that the present Ministry came into

power but with the new Ministry coming into power, the price of rice began to shoot up from Rs. 20 upwards. Then the cry arose from the people of Bengal to control the price, but the prices would not still be controlled,—may I ask the reason why? The price was not controlled in the month of April when it was over Rs. 24. Was it for the reason that it was the imperialistic policy of the British Government to raise the price very high so that the people might be forced to join the military services? Or was it the policy of the present Ministry to keep the price so high so that at least 50 per cent. of the people of Bengal might not have the pecuniary position to purchase food resulting in lesser consumption of food which will help in adjusting the shortage in supply? Or was it that the present Ministry wanted their pet agents in the meantime to sell at a high price their goods which they had purchased at a low price and thus make enormous profits, so that the Ministry or at least a part of it may have a share in that profit? I want a straight reply to these questions. I want the Hon'ble Minister to explain why the price was not controlled earlier. I also want to know what prevented the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy from not giving publicity to the figures at which Messrs. Ispahani & Co. purchased rice from outside Bengal and also the price at which the firm sold it to Government. We are told that Messrs. Ispahani & Co. gave up the profit of a few lakhs but may we know at what price Messrs. Ispahani & Co. purchased rice and at what price the firm sold it to Government? I understand that with the permission of the Government of India, Messrs. Ispahani & Co. and other pet agents of the Government of Bengal bought rice in Orissa, Bihar and the Eastern States and they were able to purchase rice at a price of Rs. 6 or Rs. 6-10 per maund, and I understand that the rice which was purchased at so low a price was sold to the Government of Bengal at no less than Rs. 30 per maund at a profit of about Rs. 24 per maund. If my statement is not correct, let the Hon'ble Minister come out with the figures at which Messrs. Ispahani & Co. purchased that rice and at which they sold it to the Government of Bengal. Sir, the public have every reason to suspect that there was some foul play in the matter of purchase of Ispahani's rice by the Government of Bengal.

Then, Sir, coming first to the working of the department in Calcutta I would submit that it is now common knowledge that bribery and corruption permeate the whole chain. When agents are appointed by Government to purchase foodgrains on their behalf, I understand some money in lump has got to be paid or some arrangements have got to be made with regard to the sharing of profits in that time. Unless some such arrangement is made or money is spent agents are not ordinarily appointed.

Then, Sir, with regard to the selection of shops where foodgrains may be sold at controlled rates some money has got to be paid by those fortunate persons who would be given shops. This is not a secret now; this has become an open secret that the shop-keepers who have got those permits to sell Government foodgrains at controlled prices got those permits by paying lump money as bribe. So is the case in the matter of coal. I understand that several city depot-holders of coal had not got permits to purchase sufficient coal from the siding depot-holders but persons who have had no

depot at all have got permits from the Civil Supplies Department as siding depot-holders to purchase coal and that those permits were obtained certainly on payment of lump sum as bribe.

Then, Sir, with regard to sugar also the very same thing is taking place. Who in this House does not know that the distributors of sugar who obtained licence from the Government made lakhs and lakhs of rupees by getting their agency for distribution. But, Sir, a sum of Rs. 3 per bag of sugar was the settled rate at which such permits were granted. I shall now deal about things which are happening in the mufassal. I know of one subdivision where the Subdivisional Officer as the head of the Supply Department in that subdivision has made a few lakhs of rupees. How he has done that I shall state by giving one example. Government sugar went from Calcutta for sale in that subdivision under the control of the Subdivisional Officer and that sugar was to be sold at the controlled price of Rs. 17 or Rs. 17-8. Thereafter the sugar merchants of that subdivision approached the Subdivisional Officer and wanted time to sell their sugar at a much higher price—at no less than Rs. 30 per maund, and about a month's time was given to those sugar merchants to sell their sugar at Rs. 30 or over, and after the sugar of these merchants was sold Government sugar was thrown into the market. Sir, that these merchants got time to sell their sugar at so high a price while Government controlled sugar was there at the subdivisional headquarters was only due to some monetary arrangement between the Subdivisional Officer and the sugar merchants.

Sir, Government restricted the movement of paddy and rice early in the month of December last. For several months that restriction of movement continued, but latterly Government removed the restriction from certain areas, yet the police officers who were posted at every corner would not allow any paddy or rice to be moved from one place to another without something being given to them as bribe. The paddy merchants of the mufassal complained that they had to pay no less than Rs. 3 per maund of paddy to the police officers to allow paddy to be removed from one place to another. Thus the price of paddy rose up in the mufassal. Still now if a paddy merchant goes to a *hat* he has to bribe the police, otherwise he cannot sell his paddy there. Besides, a police officer suddenly appears in a local *hat* and finds that rice, paddy, sugar and kerosene oil are being sold at a price much above the controlled price and rounds up several merchants. Then the merchants give some money to that police officer and thus obtains permission for selling those goods at higher prices. Those things are still going on in the mufassal.

Government has adopted a policy of price control but the machinery through which the price control is to be given effect to has become so much corrupted that the officers in charge of that machinery are allowing the policy of price control to fail. They are knowingly allowing traders to create black-markets and to sell their goods there at rates much higher than the controlled rates. I would now ask the House whether it should commend or condemn the Government.

Then, Sir, I would submit that the Hon'ble Minister should take a note that after the next *aman* crop is harvested such things do not happen again. He must realise the defects of the machinery of purchase and distribution and he must see that if the Government adopts again the policy of purchasing the entire paddy crop of Bengal he must set up a machinery which must be above suspicion and corruption and he must not undertake to purchase the entire paddy crop of Bengal unless he can set up a machinery which will be found adequate, honest and efficient to supply paddy and rice to every nook and corner of the province. Otherwise the difficulties that appeared this year will reappear next year also. I say again that the machinery of distribution should be as efficient and as honest as possible.

Lastly, Sir, he should take the public into his confidence. I hear that the present Governor while in Bihar provided for rewards to be given to those people who would give information about hoarding and black markets in Bihar. In Bengal also such rewards should be declared and the public should be asked to co-operate. (The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: It has been declared.) I again warn Government not to take up the policy of controlling the entire supply without making beforehand sufficient, efficient and honest arrangements for distribution of paddy and rice at prices approachable by the poor throughout Bengal and I would add that in future paddy and rice must not be allowed to be sold at any price beyond the controlled price.

Mr. I. C. KENNEDY: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about inadequacy of food control organisation and lack of an enforcement organisation.

My object in moving this motion is to emphasize and underline the need for a large scale organisation to deal with food control. It is a vast undertaking, and can only be carried out successfully if adequate staff is provided Government must be prepared to think in thousands rather than in scores.

The painful history of food control in Bengal is the story of a handful of men struggling hopelessly with an immense problem. It may be said truthfully that food control has been toyed with and not tackled in the large scale manner which it needed. Many months before the Directorate of Civil Supplies was established in Bengal, Bombay had a Directorate functioning. Today in Bombay an efficient rationing scheme has been put into force while in Bengal, where this problem is vital and imperative, it is being undertaken by a handful of harassed men. Is it any wonder that, one by one, these men are collapsing under the strain? What is really astonishing is that these senior officials themselves do not appear to realise that their organisation is far too small. This is a hopeless state of affairs and cannot be allowed to continue.

We, in this Party, are fully aware of the difficulty of securing men of the right type, in sufficient numbers, to staff the senior executive posts. In this connection we would point out that several senior officials have been transferred to Delhi, and the first step we consider necessary is that the

Government of Bengal should demand that the Central Government release them for very urgent and important duties in this province. Another step we recommend is that the departments of Government of Bengal should be ruthlessly combed, and every man of ability who can possibly be spared, drafted to the Food Control Organisation. This will cause inconvenience, we are aware of that, but many of the less important functions of Government departments can well be suspended in view of the present need for staffing adequately the Civil Supply Department. Until this is done, we do not consider that there is any answer to criticism of the inadequacy of the food control organisation, on the grounds of shortage of staff.

As regards the size of the food control organisation, it is not for me to suggest numbers. Expert advice has, I understand, already been given which is that, for each lakh of consumers, a staff of at least 50 is required.

Now, Sir, as to the set up of the food distribution organisation, we suggest that there should be a Supply Branch, with Deputy Directors, and Assistant Directors in charge of each commodity. There must also be a Distribution Branch with a Senior Officer in charge and, under him, Assistant Directors charged with the responsibility of controlling transport, storage, movement permits, and Government grain shops. There must also be an Intelligence and Statistical Branch to provide the information on which policy must be based. And, most important of all, there must be an Enforcement Branch, properly staffed with reliable men who can be trusted to see that Government's policy is properly carried out.

Also, Sir, there will have to be a very large rationing branch and, in addition, the Hon'ble Minister must have expert advisers who can advise him on diet and nutrition. We, in this party are no believers in committees unless their functions are very clearly defined, but we think that the Minister in charge of Civil Supplies would do well to appoint a small expert committee to advise him on policy.

A large and complex food organisation, such as is required in Bengal, must be provided with the means of enforcing its policy, and a highly efficient Enforcement Branch must be created for this purpose. In Great Britain, the Food Ministry has its own Legal Branch and, in each of the twelve divisional food offices, there is a separate Legal and Enforcement Branch, properly staffed with competent officers and inspectors. In addition, there are at least 1,500 Enforcement Officers attached to Food Control offices throughout Great Britain to ensure that the rationing and food control orders are strictly carried out. I quote these figures to give some indication of what is needed here in Bengal if we are to make our food control policy effective. One thing is certain, and that is that it is utterly futile to build up a vast food distribution organisation unless an effective weapon is forged to prevent abuses and to ensure the carrying out of policy. We shall be glad to know what plans the Hon'ble Minister has for creating an Enforcement Organisation.

On numerous occasions attention has been drawn to the totally inadequate penalties imposed for contravention of food control orders, and the deterrent punishments meted out to offenders in Great Britain have been cited. These

punishments are severe, and are ruthlessly imposed. In the view of this party much more can be done to secure compliance with Government orders by executive action—such as the cancellation of licences and forfeiture of stocks—than by petty prosecutions. We would like to hear from the Hon'ble Minister what steps he proposes to take to ensure that Magistrates deal effectively with breaches of the food control orders.

The Hon'ble Minister must know well the need for restoring public confidence for, without that, he will never eliminate panic and hoarding of supplies. Now, Sir, I contend that, if confidence in the ability of the Government to restore the food situation is to be brought about, there can be no more chopping and changing of policy. Government must decide once and for all to follow a clear cut line of action—carefully thought out—and they must be prepared to follow it unswervingly. They must abandon, once and for all, the view which appears to be strongly held in official circles, that once an order has been passed and published in the *Official Gazette*, the matter to which it refers is finished and done with. It is the duty of Government not only to decide policy but also to see it carried out.

In conclusion, Sir, I would say a word about the tempo of food administration. This must be speeded up. We are living in critical times and ordinary methods will not do. Far too often there is a noticeable lag between Government's announcement of plans and their execution. For instance, we are still waiting for the order prohibiting large scale entertainments at which essential foodstuffs are consumed. Once a plan has been decided upon, action must follow swiftly and Government must be prepared ruthlessly to cut away the mass of red tape which clogs so much of its executive machinery.

Finally, I would ask Government to consider seriously the setting up of a Training Department to give instruction to officials in food distribution methods. Food control requires the highest standard of efficiency and administrative skill, and no effort should be spared to ensure an efficient and highly trained senior staff who can build up an efficient organisation.

Mr. R. HAYWOOD: Sir, I beg to move the cut motion which stands in my name, namely, that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion upon the necessity for checking profiteering in foodstuffs in Calcutta markets.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister in his budget statement a few days ago said that in times of inflation the rich get richer and the poor poorer. I think profiteering is part of the evil machinery which brings about this unfortunate state of affairs. We realise, Sir, that there is only one great problem in Bengal, namely, the rice problem and whilst we quite realise that the Department of Civil Supplies is fully engaged with this problem we think that is no excuse why some action should not be taken for checking profiteering. I would refer especially to the appalling prices now ruling in the markets for eggs, fish, meat, milk and vegetables. Eggs I believe are somewhere about Rs. 2-8 a score, brinjals 4 to 6 annas a seer, *bindhi* 6 annas

a seer, milk 12 annas a seer, potatoes somewhere about Re. 1 a seer and so forth. I would not even mention English vegetables because in any case at this time of the year they would probably be scarce.

Now Sir, are the agriculturists by any chance picking up the additional prices that these foodstuffs are commanding. I think not. Maharaja Srischandra Nandy of Cossimbazar and the Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan in their speeches on the Agricultural Income Tax Bill were both at some pains to stress that the agriculturists were picking up practically nothing of these advanced prices. Then who is benefiting? We all know I think, it is the small number of middlemen, profiteers, shop-keepers and so forth. These petty people have no civic sense; they have no social conscience. Even Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee a few days ago—three days ago—referred to the terrible greed of the profiteers. He admitted that it was one of the causes of the acute distress now prevailing. The fault is not entirely that of the Ministry and those who are trying to put matters right. The cause is mainly with the greedy people who are primarily responsible for this state of affairs. Some people may think "Let us fleece the *Sahibs* and *Mem Sahibs* and the military and let them pay." But it is not the *Sahibs* and the military that ultimately pay. It is the middle classes and the poor that pay.

Mr. J. C. Gupta only an hour or so ago was referring to the appalling sufferings of the middle classes just now and it is the majority of these people that will ultimately pay. Now, Sir, all these foodstuffs I mention are foodstuffs which in most countries, certainly in warring countries, are already under some kind of control We do not suggest that the Government should enforce maximum prices which they cannot impose but they should at least we think declare what they consider to be profiteering and afterwards arrest the worst offenders. This I think, Sir, could be done under rule 34 of the Defence of India Rules. These people would have committed a prejudicial act. If I remember rightly such arrests were made at the beginning of the war at the end of 1939 and they had a very salutary effect. Certain it is that shortly after these people were arrested prices fell substantially. If it be suggested that there is no room in the jails in which to put these people, that would be unfortunate indeed because in my humble opinion they are worse than thieves who are already in jail.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: At least worse than security prisoners.

Mr. R. HAYWOOD: For 5 years I have listened to my friend Dr. Sanyal without interrupting him and I thought today he might perhaps remain silent and give me a chance.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I appreciate you.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Because he is your *pal*.

Mr. R. HAYWOOD: We think that no Government and no control organisation can allow profiteering on foodstuffs to go unchecked. The fact that rice is so expensive in this province makes it all the more imperative to see that soaring prices of other foodstuffs are checked. We should like

an assurance from the Hon'ble Minister that something is going to be done in the matter and that some action at least for shaming profiteers will be taken soon.

85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with war, 1939.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it would be better if at this stage the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy moves his demand under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939".

The two demands, namely, the one which has already been moved by the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and the demand to be moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy are inter-related and it would facilitate discussion if this be now moved and the cut motions relating to this motion also be moved so that the two demands with the cut motions will be open to discussion. I propose to follow this procedure.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 50,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939".

Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Cossimbazar: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 50,00,000 under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" be reduced by Rs. 100. My object is to raise a discussion about the working of the grain purchase scheme in the districts.

Sir, I am doubtful if the Government have any considered scheme for the purchase of foodgrains in the districts. All that we have come to know from time to time from Press announcements that certain districts have been declared to be surplus districts for the purchase of foodgrains. Now I would like to know how do Government determine this? No attempt seems to have been made by Government for collecting the necessary statistics. If they are depending on the statistics prepared by the Agricultural Department they are absolutely on the wrong track and it would not give the desired result. Now, Sir, how do you estimate the yield? If you are going to take the crops when they are sown there is every chance of your estimates being falsified by natural calamities. Then again how do you calculate the varying population, you have no machinery to do so. We are aware that Government agents or their sub-agents go out to the districts to make purchases. I may inform the House, Sir, that there is a regular panic among the cultivators when these sub-agents go about. The common belief is that they are not going to have adequate price and that the entire stock will be taken away. Besides, Sir, I am doubtful if the method employed by this agency is to the best interest of the cultivators. Do they go through the usual middlemen who advance money to the cultivators? In that case the whole scheme would go against the interest of the cultivators whatever may be the minimum price fixed by the Government. Then, Sir, I have definite information which goes to show that Government agents have been purchasing foodstuffs even from districts declared to be deficit districts

and what is worse even from districts affected by flood. You must at once put a stop to this practice. Certainly that is not the way to help but to embarrass the district. It is the duty of Government to see that an uniform distribution is made and no district is made to suffer at the expense of another district.

Then I understand that in certain cases when purchases are made from a district the District Officers have absolutely no knowledge of them. This is certainly a very bad system. The District Officer must not only know whenever a purchase is made but he should be consulted before any scheme of purchase is taken in hand. He in his turn may consult any non-official agency, if he feels any necessity for it. It is unfortunate, Sir, that there is a growing belief among the cultivators that all these purchases are made for the benefit of the agents of the Government who are making a large profit. I would appeal to the Government to clear up these issues. The public have a right to know what these purchases really mean. I would further like to have an assurance from Government that foodgrains should not be removed from really deficit districts and from areas suffering from natural calamities.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 50,00,000 for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) the utter wastefulness of the manner in which purchases of foodgrains have been and are being arranged on Government account or on their behalf;

(*ii*) the impropriety and abuses in the appointment of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., as the sole agent of the Bengal Government for the purchase of foodgrains for some time and the payment of large sums of money to that firm without proper scrutiny of their purchases and deliveries and the prices quoted;

(*iii*) the impropriety of the scheme of purchase of salt; and

(*iv*) the irregularities in the arrangements for the purchase and distribution of standard cloth.

Sir, much has already been said about the Civil Supplies Department and the organisations set up by the same which today number about ten. We have also heard a good deal of the benevolent activities that certain non-official agencies have undertaken for the benefit of the province of Bengal. Through my cut motion I seek to invite the attention of this House and of the public in Bengal or outside to the very serious state of affairs brought about by the ill-conceived policy of Government on grain purchases and in particular to the manner in which one particular firm has been appointed agents of Government and canons of finance have been violated in regard thereto.

Sir, there have been three distinct stages of Government schemes of foodgrains purchase: the first stage was when there was inter-provincial trade

barrier before the 17th or 18th of May, 1943; the second stage was when just along with or immediately after the lifting of the inter-provincial trade barrier a purchasing agent was appointed on behalf of the Government of Bengal for quickening imports into this province and purchasing rice from within the province; the third stage is the stage when on supposed surplus of *aus* crop in certain areas in Bengal some agents have been appointed to procure so-called surplus stock from some selected districts in the province and also some other arrangements have been made to secure grains from other parts of India. I consider, Sir, that the policy pursued by the Government at all these stages is extremely wrong, ill-conceived and full of dangerous potentialities; and as experience has shown in all these three different cases the policy adumbrated by the Government has signally failed. It will not be possible for me at this stage to enter into the details as to how in each case the policy has come to grief; I shall confine myself principally to the second stage which is still continuing to some extent—the stage in which one particular firm has been the sole agent of the Bengal Government for purchasing rice, wheat, paddy and other foodgrains at any price they can procure.

Sir, this firm of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., has been applauded with high encomiums by the Hon'ble Minister in charge. I have no quarrel with him when he says that Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd., are one of the leading firms in the city of Calcutta. But, Sir, I would like him to explain since when they became a big dealer in foodgrains? They have been a big dealer in jute and for some years they have been exporting some foodgrains to certain Middle East countries. Apart from that they were first discovered to be interested in the purchase of grains by the Secretary in the Commerce and Labour Department when they themselves signified that they were not so much in the rice and grains market and had on their own guarantee put up one of their relations—I learn that a brother-in-law (Mr. M. A. H ISPAHANI: Question That is a damned lie) Mirza Ali Akbar—as purchasing agent of the previous Government.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: He is not a relation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I think that all Muslims call each other a brother: if he is not a brother-in-law, he must be a brother at least.

Mr. Ispahani questions the relationship! His questioning the relationship between Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd., and Mirza Ali Akbar is questionable.

Sir, this Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd., was given a *carte blanche* for purchase of foodgrains, at any price. They had not entered into any agreement at the time when purchase was made and an agreement had been entered into only recently, not even one week ago. But before the agreement was actually entered into and the terms of agreement settled finally, crores and crores of rupees were permitted by Government to be paid to this firm, paid on supposed purchases as well as on advances. The total amounts of such advances have now neared five crores of rupees. I had kept track up to Rs. 4,88,00,000 up to the last week, it has now probably come up to nearly 5 crores of rupees. And, Sir, although specific questions were asked as to the total amount of deliveries as against these advances, no figures have been

forthcoming. I have on enquiry discovered that so far only less than Rs. 3 crores worth of foodgrains have been delivered to the Government receiving agents in this connection. Here also an interesting revelation I propose to make. The Government agents who were supposed to take delivery from Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., were for a long time no other firm than Messrs. Mirza Ali Akbar. The right hand makes the purchase and the left hand receives the delivery and the money goes out through the Foodgrains Purchasing Officer of the Government of Bengal who does not know how purchases have been effected, but he is compelled to pay under orders of H. M. (A voice from the Opposition Benches: Who is H. M.?) His Majesty in some cases but here the Hon'ble Minister.

Sir, I have made some enquiries specifically after bold statements were made on the floor of the House by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies. Mr. Suhrawardy made one statement during the last session that the advances complained of by Dr. Mookerjee were not advances but they were payments against purchases. Sir, a grosser misstatement of facts no person with the slightest sense of responsibility could utter on the floor of this Assembly. I have already made the categorical statement now and today that even now against that firm there is a debit account of nearly Rs. 5 crores and the Government of Bengal have so far received reports of purchase by that firm which has been taken over by the Government agents up to Rs. 3 crores only. Sir, the so-called purchases have been made in Bengal as well as other provinces and today we find that up to Rs. 2 crores have been purchased in Bengal itself and only Rs. 3 crores are supposed to have been purchased in provinces other than Bengal. If the main purpose of appointing Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., was to quicken the imports of foodgrains from outside Bengal into this province, I fail to understand why Government at all allowed that firm to force up prices in the province by buying here at any price that they wanted to offer. Sir, it is common knowledge that for some weeks the offer that Messrs. M. M. Ispahani made to the market was even higher than the prices ruling in the market and when prices had a tendency to come down to Rs. 26, 24 and 22, Messrs. M. M. Ispahani purchased on behalf of the Government and forced up the prices to Rs. 28, 29, 30 and above and why was that so? That was because Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., were not interested in the price of it. Because, in the beginning they were promised a commission on the value of the commodity and therefore the more price they could pay out of Government funds, the greater would be their amount of commission. Since then however certain things have happened. The Auditor-General of India as well as the Accountant-General of Bengal found the proposed agreement—at least some terms of the agreement—extremely unconscionable and they would not agree to such terms and indeed the terms have since been revised and a percentage has been fixed on maundage basis and not on prices. (Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: When?) Last week only.

The second bold statement made by Mr. Suhrawardy was that Messrs. M. M. Ispahani's purchases were all known and open to inspection, and that three brilliant officers of the Accountant-General are night and day going through the accounts and examining them. Do you know what the real state

of affairs about that is? One half-time officer of the Civil Supplies Directorate who is, I understand, an officer selected by the Accountant-General, Bengal, is permitted to go to Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., at 2 p.m. in the afternoon and he sits there till 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. and he does not get access to the original purchase vouchers but he only compares the bought notes submitted and the delivery notes corresponding thereto and compares the deliveries to Government receiving agents as against the alleged quantities purchased. He has not got either any time or any assistance to check up the actual purchases at the point of purchase and this officer—a half-time officer—is assisted by two clerical assistants one of whom was a bill clerk in the Civil Supplies Directorate for some time and the other is a raw new clerical hand. These are the three great experts in audit who are going night and day through the accounts! And what has been the outcome of their brilliant work up to date? The officer who goes for half time there has not yet been able even to compare the arrivals as against the purchases for more than the period beyond the month of June last. He has up to date come to the date of June at the most and that also for purchases within Bengal, and at this rate it will take him three years to complete the audit—if that be called any audit at all. This is in the fitness of things most irregular, because it is called a post-audit affair—not a pre-audit one, and, Sir, where crores and crores are involved, it is surprising how the Government of Bengal thought fit to permit money to be squandered away with a post-script coming later on about certain irregularities. Already out of those few scrutinies that have been made more than sixty thousand rupees of irregularities have been discovered and reported in the accounts of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., by that officer to the Accountant-General, Bengal. I have had information from one responsible officer of the Government of Bengal itself that when one of their officers was sent to facilitate the import of Ispahani's purchases from Bihar, he discovered that the local price at that place never went beyond Rs. 19 per maund, while Ispahanis' average showing of sales to Bengal from that place has been Rs. 27-8. In Orissa Messrs. M. M. Ispahani's men were actually arrested at Puri or Cuttack because of certain clandestine transactions that they were trying to manage at that place. In Central Provinces the Chief Secretary of the Central Provinces Government has already lodged a definite complaint against the firm of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., with the Government of India. The Chief Secretary said: "No use complaining to the Government of Bengal, because they are the patrons of Ispahanis" (laughter), and what is their complaint? They said that Messrs. Ispahanis' men purchased foodgrains there at Rs. 9 and Rs. 10 and sought to export to Bengal and get huge profits therefrom. The local merchants brought it to the notice of the Central Provinces Government "if the Government of Bengal were prepared to pay a high price, why should we be deprived of the reasonable margin of profit for the merchants of this province?" And as a result Ispahanis' firm was made to suffer heavily in Central Provinces. They issued peremptory orders to seize all Ispahanis' stocks anywhere and prevented their export to Bengal. That was one of the important revelations and when the Hon'ble Minister in charge says that other provinces did not co-operate, he ought to find out where really the fault lies.

Sir, Messrs. Ispahani, Ld., have a number of brokers and sub-agents. Theirs is a big firm and it may be an information to the House here that several of their brokers are also Marwari and non-Bengali firms from other parts. They buy on account of Messrs. Ispahanis', but they submit bought notes on their own account and it is difficult to find out what price actually they have paid and what have been their real vouchers for exhibiting to the Government of Bengal.

Sir, Mirza Ali Akbar's stock was, at first during the last food drive, not permitted to be taken into account. I do not know if the members of this House are aware that during the Calcutta and Howrah food drive certain big stockists were kept out of account. Their inventories were not allowed to be made by ordinary mortals, but they were left to be taken by special persons. One of such special persons, who was entrusted to look into the godowns of Mirza Ali Akbar, godowns supposed to be keeping Government's stocks only, and naturally who was assisted by certain trade agents who are supposed to be experts in examining stocks, when they were counting godown stocks, they found at once that in some of the godowns, the stock was hundred per cent. more than what was declared to be the stock in the records of the Civil Supplies Directorate—that officer, a responsible officer of the Indian Civil Service, brought it to the notice of some important member of the Police Service and they both went and sealed the godowns. (A voice: How many godowns?) Several godowns in Howrah, Chetla, Ramkrishtopur and other places. A peremptory order went that "you have got to do nothing with the counting of this. We will make arrangements". A Special Intelligence Officer took it in his own hand under instructions of the Hon'ble Minister to take inventory. (The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I do not know anything about it.) The local Superintendent of Police who is also an important responsible officer of Government was rebuked for having taken up this stock-taking himself, and assurances were given in this House that the results of that inventory would be revealed shortly. Neither that officer nor the officer who originally sealed the godowns are aware as to how this stock is being taken or if at all it has been taken and yet we hear that probably the stock will tally. It has been a pretty long time and since then one of the important officers of the Civil Supplies Directorate under orders not of the Minister in charge but under orders of the newly appointed Food and Supplies Commissioner or with his permission and order has placed other firms than Mirza Ali Akbar to take over deliveries on behalf of Government. In addition to Mirza Ali Akbar now several other firms are relieving the Government of the burden of imports coming on Messrs. Ispahanis' account.

Sir, Messrs. Ispahani, Limited, are not only helped in this direct way, but there are several clandestine manners also in which their interests are sought to be safeguarded. Sir, a few weeks ago Messrs. Ispahani, Limited, quoted Rs. 23 as the minimum rate for the supply of *dal* to a Government Department. Another firm offered Rs. 22-4, and, Sir, within two days orders were issued that all imports of *dal* on private accounts must be seized, and today you will find that not a single private dealer is in a position to import *dal* or other grains through Howrah station and the price

has gone up to Rs. 23-8 to enable Messrs. Ispahani to supply *dal* to Government with profit. (Uproar.)

Sir, today there is complete want of confidence in the entire activity of the Government of Bengal through this one big thoughtless action, and I sincerely deplore the manner in which the purchases have been arranged, because the effect thereof will be that Bengal will go starving. Full-throated assurances have been given that large quantity of grains will be coming in from the Punjab, but my apprehensions are that Punjab will not sell any more grains to Bengal unless this matter is settled as to whether there is any margin of profit being made by intermediaries or by the Government of Bengal for wheat and wheat products imported into this province. My information is that for the last five days no adequate purchase could be made in the Punjab on behalf of the Government of Bengal although one responsible officer of the Government of Bengal is there and making efforts to buy, because the traders there say "oh, unless you make sure that the price at which you will purchase will be the price at which you will sell there, we are not going to be befooled and we will not make anybody else rich at our cost". Sir, the Punjab wheat will not come, not because the Punjab Ministers or the public are unsympathetic towards Bengal, but because the Government of Bengal are alleged to be making huge profit themselves or some other agents appointed by them are doing this. (A voice: Is that the Bengal Government or any other party?) That is to be discovered. In April the Central Provinces Government were prepared to sell about 3 lakhs of maunds of *dal*. The Government of Bengal with their usual alacrity sent their agents in the month of June, but the Central Provinces Government absolutely refused to sell through the Bengal Government agents though they were prepared to negotiate directly with the Government and deliver directly with the assistance of the Government of India. Recently, a few days ago, the Bengal Government appointed one single firm for purchasing oil from the Central Provinces. I am not sure what fate this firm will meet with.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Central Provinces or United Provinces?

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: You know best.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The firm is a good one, but the system is wrong. While this has been the system of purchase outside, my esteemed friend the Maharaja Srishchandra Nandy, of Cossimbazar, has invited the attention to the mistake and folly committed in the policy of purchases in Bengal itself. There is no arrangement made to supply the ordinary public with grains from outside Bengal through ordinary channels of trade or through Government distributing centres. The Government have admitted that they have only made arrangements for supply through controlled shops, through certain priority concerns and to essential services. They have not as yet been able to think of the ordinary citizen and yet they have issued peremptory orders that all private imports must stop and whenever private imports come anywhere they are seizing them

with ruthless alacrity. Mr. Kirby, the great expert in rationing, who has been brought down from Great Britain to help in this matter, was specifically asked: "Your advice has been to seize all these imports, but what source have you left to feed the ordinary citizen who does not come under these schemes?". He keeps quiet. He says "I don't know. This aspect of the question did not strike me". That was his reply. This is the kind of expert that we have to deal with.

I have said enough so far as Ispahanis' are concerned. I would only conclude that part of my observation by inviting your attention to the very healthy maxim that has been before us for some days in connection with an interesting case that came up in the High Court, the maxim of Lord Hewart that justice must not only be done but must appear to be done also.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Seen to be done.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, it must be seen to be done. In the case of Messrs. Ispahanis we demand an open enquiry not only into the manner in which they were appointed but also into the manner of all their transactions enabling the Committee to go into the details of their first original purchases as well as delivery. We would also like to know how, where and to what extent this firm has acted in a generous way to help the people of Bengal out of their present difficulty. Our information is——

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Only two minutes more, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already given you half an hour. I give you two more minutes.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have got in my motion two other subjects, one regarding salt and the other regarding standard cloth.

With regard to salt, my friend Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee has already invited your attention to the utter uselessness of having Rs. 50 lakhs provided for storing salt unless the intention is to patronise some firm or firms. Today the position is that Government controlled shops sell salt at a higher rate than the rate at which it is available in the market. It has been the experience of everybody. Whatever commodity the Bengal Government, Directorate of Civil Supplies touch, they first make the commodity disappear, then they make it go to the black market and then make it disappear in a bottomless sink. Let us not be faced with the same position with regard to salt.

With regard to standard cloth, the method of distribution still leaves much room for improvement. We have been told that none but recognised dealers who had been in the trade for a number of years would be given agencyship for distribution. But nothing has been done.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is up. I am sorry I cannot give you any more time.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I move my motion for the acceptance of the House with all the sincerity I can command.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was not ready for the mixing up of the two demands and therefore I will have to be a bit rambling in my statement. (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: As you always are.) Mr. Speaker, I appeal to you that not one of them shall interfere when I speak. They have been given a patient hearing and they must have the gentlemanliness to behave.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope they will not interrupt you.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I insist on my right to speak and I beg of you to grant it to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, please go on.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: The bankruptcy of the Opposition in its whole outlook turns on one little point. They can flog a dead horse as much as they like but the arguments that they bring forward show to me as clearly as anything that Ispahani has become an obsession with them. Ispahani means a bit of economic regeneration and rehabilitation of my brothers in this province. The monopolists would, therefore, shout like this. But the mills of God grind slow and they do grind fine.

Sir, I wish the industry and energy of the honourable member who preceded me were used to better purpose. He has indulged in inexactitudes today that would require beating even from the most terrible person that has never uttered the truth. Sir, I state with all the responsibility that I can command and declare as my friend said in the earlier part of his speech that there is no question of *suppressio falsi*. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: *Suppressio veri.*) I am sorry, *suppressio veri* and that every point that he has made is an absolute and complete *suggestio falsi*. I do not know which speech to take first. The first speaker tonight created rather a good impression on my mind by trying to explain to us his point of view and the reason which in his view brought about the maladministration he complained of. It was from his point of view an I. C. S. *vs.* Trade controversy and the I. C. S. according to his view had proved itself to be incapable. Sir, it began when we were not there. It is again a part of the legacy handed down to us. The Directorate of Civil Supplies was worked by the I. C. S. at a time when we were miles away and it does require a bit of courage in men who have held charge of the department and their asssociates to come forward and run down the thing which they themselves had initiated.

The question was asked, Sir, as to why voluntary effort was not invited. Let us here and now admit from the arguments used by the gentlemen opposite that we as a nation are, to quote Mr. Gupta's words, scoundrels: he called merchants scoundrels and wanted one scoundrel to take care of the

other, that is, to set a thief to catch a thief. But, Sir, if merchants are all scoundrels, we shall also have to widen our vision and include in our national outlook every section of the population. What shall we do? We are a nation of dishonest people, not only the I. C. S. men, not only the subordinate services, but even organisations which are in our hands show the same weaknesses and the same defects. It is either that or whatever they have said is entirely wrong. I do not know the name of the constituency Mr. Gupta represents. Therefore, I shall have to satisfy myself by saying that the honourable member for a part of Calcutta had the temerity to say that the Ispahanis were an inexperienced firm in the rice trade. He was not born when Ispahanis were dealing in rice. Perhaps one or two generations were not in existence when the Ispahanis were doing business in rice——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That was perhaps in Persia, not here.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: It is a matter of generations, perhaps it is for nine generations that the Ispahanis have been doing business. They have done rice business in Bengal for four generations; they have done rice business in other parts of India and they have done rice business outside India in various parts of the world. Sir, every statement made about the Ispahanis is incorrect, malicious and mischievous. The main charges——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: How much have you been paid to plead for the Ispahanis?

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, will you allow that insinuation to be made?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not allowing it.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: May I ask you, Sir, to tell him to go outside when I am delivering my speech (laughter)?

Sir, a statement has been made by the honourable Doctor of the University of London and he demands of the House that we shall take it as correct? I say, it is incorrect. (Cries of "No", "No", and "Why not face an enquiry" from the Opposition benches.)

Sir, we allowed them a patient hearing and I appeal to the Leader of the Opposition through you to ask his followers to behave properly.

Sir, a statement has been made that the Ispahanis received commission on the price basis. That statement, Sir, I deny, and I characterise it as absolutely incorrect——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: They did not receive; that was a draft agreement.

Mr. SPEAKER: Allow him to finish his speech.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHAYA: But why should he be allowed to make useless statements?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order, I have repeatedly reminded you that when you were speaking the other side did not interrupt you and it is desirable that you should not interrupt him.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: The Arabic saying, as you know, Sir, is, 'اَلْحَقُّ مُرٌّ' —truth is bitter; and the other Persian saying which the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition understands is—'دروغ گو را حافظه نه باشد'—the liar has no memory. The Ispahanis never received commission on the basis of money; they are to receive commission which is their legitimate due on the basis of maundage. That rules out the whole case prepared by the honourable member for the municipalities of Murshidabad. He has made another statement and that is as if the Ispahanis and that their agents alone were taken to task in the Central Provinces. I again state with all the responsibility I can command that not one but every merchant was not allowed to take rice out of the Central Provinces. Every maund purchased by the Ispahanis in the Central Provinces was sold to the Government of Bengal at cost and right away. If the Chief Secretary said anything to the contrary, he was misinformed and mistaken. The Hon'ble ex-Minister for Food for four days also insinuated about the disappearance of large quantities of rice. Sir, he did indulge in a bit of arithmetic. May I ask him to calculate the daily requirements not only of the whole of Bengal but of Calcutta and the industrial area alone.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not served by the Government of Bengal.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I know who is served by whom. Please let me speak. You have said more than enough. Allow me now to have my say.

The Hon'ble ex-Minister for Food if he indulges in a bit more of arithmetic will himself I feel certain find out where the quantities have gone. Four and a half crores of rupees have also been mentioned. If he will sit down and calculate the price that was paid, he will find that instead of the Government of Bengal giving any money, it was the Ispahanis that gave credit to the Government from day to day. A reflection has been cast on Government accountants: whether they came for three hours or for the twenty-four hours of the day, the point is that the accounts are not held up but everything connected with every item is audited from day to day. Not a maund of rice is bought by the firm of Ispahanis unless the Director of Civil Supplies gives his sanction. Every maund, perhaps every grain, of rice that is bought is brought, accounted for and sanctioned. To run down a business house on the question of the composition of auditors and accountants working under the Accountant-General is not my business; it may be the business of people who do not understand the A.B.C. of how businesses are conducted. It is unfortunate that the Ispahanis are the sole agents, but that is not their fault. Not one speaker from the Opposition has told us that other Governments have appointed sole agents and those sole

agents have come to Calcutta and sold rice and paddy *benami*. The investigations and research of the honourable doctor of the University of London should have told him that such a thing has happened in Calcutta.

"ہم اگر بیٹھیں تو کاہل کہلائیں * شیخ بیٹھے تو ترکل ٹھہرے"

—if a Muslim does it he is a blackguard——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: While you are sitting there we would not like any attempt to be made to drag this debate to a communal turn. Again the same unfortunate attempt is being made by the present speaker to drag in communalism and he has again uttered the same words—every Mussalman is a scoundrel, a blackguard. This kind of trying to raise communal issues has become a habit with this member and if he cannot stand on logic let him not try to speak at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have understood your point of order. Unfortunately for me my attention was a little diverted in another way. I would ask Mr. Siddiqi to confine his remarks to the matter under discussion and he will, I hope, try not to raise any matter which is likely to embitter communal feelings.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Let them be embittered. The charges are so malicious and we have very grave suspicion that it is due to communal feelings. No question about that.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to appeal to my countrymen in my own humble way. I challenge any one of the gentlemen opposite to look at problems in the way in which I do, but when I see mischief, when I see malice, when I see misdeeds which are intended directly to injure my people, you will permit me the liberty to speak out. If Ispahanis' appointment as sole agents is a criminal breach of the law in public life I should have liked a word from some honourable member opposite to say that other Governments had also committed a similar breach. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We cannot criticise other Governments.) I shall not be wrong if I say that the goods sold *benami* have been bought by people who are perhaps not unknown to speakers opposite.

Sir, it has also been suggested that Mirza Ali Akbar's godowns were sealed and things found there against those allowed by law. They thought they had found a rat there but they could not catch it, for the reason that when the Ispahanis were appointed agents they went out of the grain business altogether. They gave up all their godowns, and for the information of members opposite, I do hereby categorically deny any relationship between Mirza Ali Akbar and Mirza Ahmad Ispahani. Mirza Ahmad Ispahani stood guarantee for Mirza Ali Akbar who came as emigrant from Rangoon where he had lost his all. The Ispahanis considered it a duty to help a man who had seen better days. Honourable gentlemen opposite will not understand me when I say that the Tradition of the Rasul, the Messenger of Allah, and the directions given by him forbid a Muslim to make money

out of the misery of his fellow-men. It is *haraam* in a sense, as the honourable and learned Leader of the Opposition will understand, we have been told—

مَنِ احْتَكَرَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَّا - لَعْنَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِمْ

(He who gathers and hoards for gain anything
Which goes to prolong or help human life
Is not of us.
And the Curses of God are upon him.)

The honourable Leader of the Opposition will at least grant the Ispahanis this much right that they are Muslims and that they believe in the teachings of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah.

Sir, I may also tell you, and which has not been stated by the statisticians and by the learned gentleman who knows more about railway freights than I do, and I question even the sincerity of the research, that the Ispahanis within 24 hours gave to Bengal about 250,000 maunds of rice (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not brought into Bengal but bought.) Brought and bought would mean the same thing in law. My friend has not read law and perhaps he will be corrected by the ex-Principal of the Law College.

Sir, they bought and they handed over to the Government of Bengal at Rs. 14-12-9 when the ruling market rate was somewhere between Rs. 30 and Rs. 32 (Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: What was the purchase price?) Purchase price may be anything, it was sold to Government at Rs. 14-12-9. (Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: There is the rub.) If these gentlemen have any honesty left about them I request them to come with me and I request them to go and see for themselves. An offer was made but those who made the criticism ran away. It was almost a year ago when the honourable member for the Municipalities of Murshidabad made a similar unfounded, vague and mischievous charge and I asked him "Come with me; you will be given every facility" but he ran away. He never went there nor did he investigate. Whether he was uttering the truth or not had better be left to the judgment of his fellow-men.

Sir, the rice of which I was talking was bought at various prices the average of which came to Rs. 14-12-9 and this was during the free trade days. If the Ispahanis had wanted to make money they could have made about Rs. 36 lakhs. Would not ordinary decencies compel us, Sir, to acknowledge the donation of 36 lakhs of rupees by the Ispahanis? I request the honourable member for Murshidabad Municipalities to verify my statement, and if he finds I am wrong I shall in this House submit an apology to him in any language he chooses or which you may permit. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I accept that part of the statement.) Whether he accepts or he does not, truth is there. If you throw dust at the sun it falls into your eyes and into your mouth. The Ispahanis are a commercial house of unblemished reputation. It is surprising that the Hindu merchants and other merchants——

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: How long will he continue?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Siddiqi, try to finish soon.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I could go on in this way speaking and exposing them to the ridicule of all sensible people. They had left Bengal on the verge of a crisis and that one man Mirza Ahmad Ispahani saved the situation. Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca and Mr. Fazlul Huq should get up and say that Ispahani was the benefactor, that Ispahani saved Bengal and the generations to come. I am stating facts. A day will come when they will have to acknowledge that the blame for the deaths of those who are dying is at the doors of those people who created the starvation, at the doors of people who went to Delhi, in December, 1942, and said "We are all right; leave us alone", at the doors of people who morning, noon and night talked of constitutionalism, talked of this, that and the other, talked of the sandwiching of Ministers between the Governor and the permanent officials. But the thing that they should have talked about and done was neglected and left undone. (Uproar.) (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: What are you doing?) I say, Sir, that my heart will drop 56 drops of blood as against theirs of a lesser quantity at the misery of our people. (Uproar.) I challenge their sympathy for the people in the districts; they do not possess any. Propaganda in newspapers and shouting in the Shraddhananda Park do not feed my Muslim brothers in the districts. (Uproar.) I would beg of them to keep quiet and not talk of sympathy for the Muslim and Hindu brothers of Bengal.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, I have listened with great attention to the rambling defence which Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi has put forward on behalf of Ispahani, Ltd., more for the sake of the edification of the members of his own party than for the people of this province. It requires considerable guts and grit for people on whose head lies the blood of thousands of people of this province to speak in the strain in which Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi has done this evening. The lives of thousands of people have been sacrificed at the altar of the greed, dishonesty and avarice of those who are responsible for running the administration today in this province. And for their champion Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi to stand up and speak in the strain that he has done requires an amount of effrontery which he alone is capable of.

Mr. Speaker, we have learnt *ad nauseam* that they are suffering from the legacy handed down to them by the previous Ministry. That is the burden of their song for the last six months. Thank God that at least Ispahanis are not a legacy from the last Ministry. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Opposition benches.) It is a creation of this Ministry, a creation in all its luridness, in all its horror and in all its dishonesty and corruption.

Sir, Mr. Suhrawardy, Mr. Ispahani and Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi have formed a fine trio in the politico-economic history of Bengal for the last few years. Mr. Suhrawardy and Mr. Ispahani are in the fore-front—Mr. Siddiqi forming the tail-end as a gentleman who takes some interest in rice and jute so far as the fire insurance aspect is concerned. Sir, we

have heard that during the previous Ministry in which Mr. Suhrawardy was the Commerce Minister the scandal about jute transactions was so horrible and these two names were linked up in such an inextricable fashion—Mr. Ispahani and Mr. Suhrawardy—that it became a byword in the politics of this province. Everybody in this House is perfectly aware of this. (Uproar.) This is not a new thing in the politics of Bengal. Whenever Mr. Suhrawardy has in his hand the gift of a thing Mr. Ispahani is always handy to share in the spoils, and the jute transactions of those days are well known never to be effaced from the history of this province.

Now, Sir, talking of legacy, it is well that they have ruled only for six months and not for 16 months, because if in six months they have succeeded in starving this province what will happen if they have the chance of ruling for 16 months God alone knows. Well, Sir, what will happen is this. They will reduce to dead and dry bones a fair province and a great people.

Sir, at the time Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee resigned his office there was an impulse on the part of some other Minister to follow suit and to resign. My friends opposite are shouting why I did not resign. I am going to say now why I did not. I did not resign because I did not like to accelerate the installation in office of a gang of people who have now got the whiphand in the province. I did not resign because my Party stood in the way of my resignation. And who in the Party, Sir, was the loudest then in protesting that I should not resign; it was Mr. Baroda Prasanna Pain who is now adorning the Treasury benches. Writing to me from Berhampore on the 28th November, 1942, this is how Mr. Baroda Prasanna Pain delivered himself: "Bengal will never forgive you if you resign now. Bengal will never, never forgive you if you came out and handed her over to the Suhrawardy gang." That was in November, 1942. Mr. Speaker, people may change their views when they join the ranks of gangsters themselves. But this was in November last and the words were prophetic. That is the answer to the question why I did not resign then. I did not resign because I did not want to facilitate the advent of those who are bringing Bengal to starvation and ruin. (Applause from Opposite benches.)

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Sir, I was not inclined to speak this evening, but for the frequent mention of Islam and the Muslim community by Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi. I would not have spoken at all but for the interruptions from that gentleman who in season and out of season talks about decency and good manners. They have taken the name of Islam only to create in the minds of the public an impression that, simply because Ispahanis happened to be Muslims therefore all these charges have been levelled against them. Not one word has been uttered by Mr. Siddiqi to contradict the charges which are so categorical, so emphatic and based upon such solid foundation. Have they the courage to face an enquiry? Have they the courage to face an impartial commission to enquire and investigate into the serious allegations that have been levelled against them? If they have got the courage, let them face such an enquiry. Let not Islam be so easily exploited. We will not allow Islam and the Muslim community to

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reputation of the provincial Government and for the reputation of the firm of which we have heard such a lot, it is essential that there should be an open enquiry by a tribunal which will command the confidence of the people of this province. Sir, I shall not dwell on this point any further.

I shall speak for just a few minutes on a far more serious aspect of the present problem that faces Bengal. We have talked today for a few hours mainly about Mr. Ispahani. Let us leave him alone and his firm for the time being. Now let me ask what is the position in Bengal today. Rice has disappeared from the market practically in all parts of Bengal. We have been receiving reports, reports of a most miserable character, from Hindus and Muslims belonging to all parties that families are starving and dying and rice is not available even at the highest price which people are prepared to pay for it. The question of questions today is: how was this price control promulgated without making a proper and adequate arrangement for supply? It is this specific charge which I bring against the Bengal Government and for this alone it has forfeited its right to exist as a responsible Ministry which is out to take care of the welfare of millions of Bengal's population.

Now, Sir, what was the position in June last? What was the statement which the Hon'ble Minister made? He required stock-taking of available rice in all parts of Bengal. One of the reasons given by the Minister was that this stock-taking had to be done in order to ensure the quantity of rice available in every part of the province, *thana* by *thana*, subdivision by subdivision, district by district. We ask, Sir, where are the results of this stock-taking? Where are the statistics? Does not the Government know where the stocks of rice are lying hidden today? We are asked, why don't you tell us who have hidden these stocks? Which merchants and traders are hiding these stocks? My reply is that it is for the Government to find out where the stocks have gone to because you claim that you have obtained statistics and you know where the rice is actually lying including the residential houses of individuals under the very *taktaposhes* on which people lie and take their rest at night. Where has rice gone to? Now, Sir, the report which we are now receiving is that rice cannot be traced even where it is available because of collusion between certain sections of local officials and the merchants who may be hiding rice for their own individual interests. It is a rotten state of affairs. It is the ultimate duty of the Government to find out where rice is available. Either there is rice or there is not. If there is no rice, then there should not have been any price control, anyway in such a thoughtless manner. If there is rice it is up to you to find it out. You can find a revolver lying hidden inside a tank and you cannot discover hundreds and thousands of tons of rice which you say are in existence in the markets of Bengal but which on account of your corruption and incompetence you cannot trace.

One practical suggestion which I would like to make is this. Today unless proper arrangements are made for sending foodgrains to the rural areas of Bengal, Bengal will starve to death. The reports which have come are indeed of a most terrible character. It may be that during the next

fortnight or three weeks offensives may start on the Burma front and it may lead to serious dislocation with regard to internal transport arrangements inside Bengal. What will happen to the province then? Unless you can make arrangements within the next one week or fortnight for sending out foodgrains to each subdivision and *thana* which must have a Government store for the purpose of supplying to the people who are dying for want of foodgrains, you cannot save the lives of millions of Bengal's population. Yesterday's statement of Mr. Suhrawardy was utterly unsatisfactory. I know Mr. Suhrawardy has his ability. But as regards yesterday's statement, what a dismal confession of failure it was? What was that statement? It was that he was doing something for Calcutta. When that something would be done, God alone knows. But with regard to the mufassal, his statement was "We are issuing instructions to District Officers, to Subdivisional officers and to police officers to find out rice from wherever possible". Is that the message which he had to deliver to the people of Bengal today when they are actually dying for want of food? What we want Government to do is immediately to disclose the total stocks they have in possession. Hundreds and thousands of tons of foodgrains are coming from outside Bengal, but where are they going and where have they gone during the last fortnight? It will not do to save Calcutta and greater Calcutta alone because Bengal does not consist of Calcutta and Calcutta alone: the rest of Bengal has to be saved and that could be saved only by a fair and equitable distribution of whatever foodgrains that are available within the province to-day and of whatever foodgrains that may come from outside Bengal. I say this with a full sense of responsibility that if the Government were not corrupt, were not dishonest, if the Government had succeeded in pooling the resources of the province and making a real appeal to the people of the province, then the stock they have in possession and which still exists within the province and the the stock that must be made to come from outside Bengal will be sufficient to keep us going till December. Then the biggest problem is: what about the main *aman* crop? After December when the *aman* crop will be ready, if Government has not a satisfactory scheme of organisation completed before December—not of advancing moneys to Ispahanis, as moneys are being advanced to Ispahanis and other favourite firms, not by appointment of sole agents of a doubtful character but by formulating an organisation which will command the willing confidence of all sections of the people, then Bengal will be thrown into a real bottomless pit. Today the question of questions is that Government cannot face the present situation without the spontaneous co-operation of all sections of the people. We make the offer of co-operation, but we say again that co-operation must be responded to. The co-operation must be responded to in a proper spirit of good will.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit, but was allowed to finish his speech.)

Sir, we do not believe in the *bona fides* of the action and policy undertaken by Government. If my friends of the European party should know this that while people are dying of starvation and sensational disclosures

are being made as regards the incompetence and corruption of the Government or of the Ministry as is composed today, they should not vote for the Ministry which has proved its utter failure during the last five months.

Last, what is the Ministry doing even now? The news pouring in from various parts of Bengal is not allowed to be published in newspapers. Today I received this postcard as I was coming to this meeting—it contains a most miserable tale from Chittagong, an appeal to Government, to humanity, to the people of the country to come to the rescue of the people of Chittagong where people are dying by hundreds and thousands. There were certain sentences which were erased by the C.I.D. (Cries of "Shame, shame" from the Opposition Benches.) It contained no message which was going to be of benefit to the enemy but it contained certain information which, the writer thought, might be of help to persons who are trying to alleviate the sufferings of the people. (Cries of "Ha, ha" from the Coalition Benches.) Now, Sir, if this is the spirit in which the situation is going to be tackled, I would say that solution is impossible, British historians in this country wrote about the so-called Black Hole tragedy—I say this Government has turned the whole of Bengal into a black hole today. People are dying in hundreds and thousands: there is no possibility of getting any remedy from any quarter. If you Ministers feel that you are incapable of running the show and of feeding the people, you should go out. (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: So that you can come in?) We do not care to go there. The British rulers who still say that this country belongs to them as the *Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* have been shouting for the last few days in British newspapers—let these British rulers take full responsibility and then it will be up to them to prove to the civilised world whether Bengal is going to be starved to death in 1943.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe the last speaker has given a clue to the whole propaganda that is being carried on in the province by the Opposition. (Cries of "shame", "shame", from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry it is my painful duty to remind you that we are to rise at half-past five in this month of Ramzan—(Cries of "We have no food; we want it", "we won't tolerate these remarks" from the Opposition benches.) It may be everybody is fasting; perhaps the whole province is fasting; but this formal fasting is a different thing, as all Muslims know.

Now here it is already forty minutes past five, and I hope you will allow the two Hon'ble Ministers to finish their speeches as quickly as possible. But if you go on interrupting in this way, the result will be that we will have to wait longer than we desire.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Let us assume that the charges have been satisfactorily answered and let us go home. We need not wait for any speech.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: All these people could not be dying for the sake of propaganda: will that give them food?

Maulvi ABDUL WAHED: On a point of an information, Sir, আমি আপনার কাছে একটা কথা জানতে চাই। আমি জানতে চাই এই যে, মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী যে বক্তৃতা দিতে দাঁড়িয়েছেন, তিনি কি Civil Supply Department এর মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের হয়েও জবাব দেবেন, না Civil Supply Departmentএর মন্ত্রী মহোদয় আলাদা বলবেন? (Voice; না, তাঁর বাকী আছে।)

Mr. SPEAKER: দু-জনেই বলবেন?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, the very fact that the deaths of the people of the province can be used as propaganda. This propaganda has been so maliciously made. (Loud cries from the Opposition benches.) I will ask the honourable members to listen to the rest of my speech, and if there is anything wrong, they can then challenge it. I say it is all sheer propaganda. (Loud cries again from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the honourable Leader of the Opposition to kindly see that there is no interruption from his side.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Sir, the Chief Minister begins by saying that all this is due to propaganda. Let him answer if there is food in the province.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have charged Government in various ways, and it would be only fair to allow the Hon'ble Minister to make his statement in meeting those charges.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, the poor firm of the Ispahanis is being grounded down merely because they are the means of an attack on the Government itself. The whole object is to utilise the situation for the purpose of attacking the Government. The Ispahanis are a handy target for attacks on the Government of Bengal.

Now, Sir, I take full responsibility also for the appointment of Messrs. M. M. Ispahani, Ltd., as the sole agents. The appointment was made in consultation with the Regional Commissioner and His Excellency the Governor of Bengal. Now, Sir, I say this—and let the honourable members deny—that propaganda has been so successful that even the highest in the land has been implicated in it. Can the honourable members deny this? (Cries of "Who is the highest in the land?", "Who is he?", from the Opposition benches). You know well who he is; (Cries of "Have the courage to say who is he", from the Opposition benches.) The Governor of Bengal. And the absurdity of the whole thing can be seen from the fact that it has been said that the illness of the Governor of Bengal is not true and genuine. Can people deny this? Can the opposition deny that the whole affair is a pièce of propaganda?

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: On a point of order, Sir. Is Sir Nazimuddin quite relevant when he insinuates that many people say many things about the highest in the land? Is it relevant to the particular subject-matter under discussion? Let him have the courage to name him.

Mr. SPEAKER: He has already made mention of the name. You have said that he has not got the courage to name, but he has had the courage to name him.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: That illness is irrelevant. That has no bearing upon the particular subject-matter under discussion——

Mr. SPEAKER: You ought to know the rules and procedure. He is now making his statement and you ought to know that you can give reply to him on other occasions when the same thing will be discussed.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: May I rise on a point of order, Sir? The Hon'ble Chief Minister stated that there have been insinuations against the highest in the land, then he said that His Excellency the Governor is somehow implicated in connection with the contract being given to Ispahanis and he also said that it is also rumoured that Sir John Herbert's illness is a faked illness. But up till now such reports have not appeared in newspapers. Will this statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister be allowed to be published in the newspapers tomorrow? I ask for your ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: Why not? It should be permitted.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir Nazimuddin said "The highest in the land has been implicated". Is he referring to Sir Thomas Rutherford?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, he has indicated.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: The honourable members know very well what I mean. After this the correct thing for them is to apologise to me for attacking me for using the word "propaganda". (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Give food and stop propaganda.)

Sir, at the time when this decision had to be made, we realised that it was a grave responsibility. We realised that the words which are now being said and the allegations that are now being made would be levelled against us. It was obvious that our enemies would make political capital of a clean decision. There were some who said that it would not be prudent to make the appointment; but, on the other hand, we were advised by responsible persons that the primary consideration before us at that time was to get rice into Bengal. Members of this House should remember that at that time there was only three days' stock of rice left in Calcutta. That was also the time when the barrier was lifted and a quick decision had to be made at that time. I will also remind the House that if the speeches of Dr. Sanyal are looked up in the Assembly proceedings it will be found that he took exception to agents not being appointed and he said that there should be a sole agent. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not sole

agent but agency system.) Up to that time we had no agent. If we wanted to get rice cheaply, it was better not to reveal that we had somebody here as agent. We decided not to reveal the fact that we had an agent. The Governments of Assam and Bihar and the Government of India—they have all their sole agents and I claim that the commission that is being paid by us to Messrs. Ispahanis will compare favourably with the commission that is being paid by the Government of India and others. Immediately after appointing Ispahanis I travelled with the Regional Commissioner to Assam and I remember on more than one occasion he said—he knew about the rice position in Bengal better than anybody else—that the only consideration that we must have was to get rice at any price in Bengal. The price factor would come in later on but at the time we had to get rice. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He was another bungler.) He may be a bungler but he is a Judge of the High Court and an impartial man.

Then I come to another point but I shall not go into details. I will ask the honourable members to consider honestly and conscientiously what I am saying and then to judge whether Messrs. Ispahanis could possibly have done the mean things that have been alleged by the opposition. It is a simple fact which will be easily grasped by everybody and as Ispahani's appointment has been discussed all over India, I hope everyone will judge it from what I shall now say I believe it has been admitted by Dr. Sanyal himself that Messrs. Ispahanis at the time of free trade bought rice at an average price of Rs. 14-8. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I did not say they bought. The ruling price was that.) They have charged that ruling price Rs. 14-8 for 2½ lakh maunds, which they sold to Government. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: At some places even lower.) Now at that time the ruling price in Bengal was Rs. 30 and over per maund. Without incurring opprobrium, without incurring any risk, without being criticized by some as being greedy, they could have been the benefactors and they could have come to the Government of Bengal and said "Here we have 2½ lakh maunds of rice for sale". The Government of Bengal would have gone down on their bended knees and would have paid them Rs. 30 or any price, without question. Any man who would have come to the Government of Bengal at that time and said "I have got 2½ lakh maunds of rice to sell at Rs. 30" —the Government of Bengal would have closed the bargain without question. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It was a *fatka* bargain. There was no stock in the *fatka*.) Sir, Ispahanis could have made about Rs. 37 lakhs by that one transaction. Now before you can establish any charge of corruption, before you can establish any charge of impropriety against them, you have got to show that by being the sole agents of Bengal, Ispahanis have made more than Rs. 37 lakhs. (Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Set up a tribunal.) Now, even according to the estimate of Dr. Sanyal, they purchased rice worth Rs. 5 crores and at 1 per cent. commission, the commission comes up to Rs. 5 lakhs. Assuming for the purpose that by other means they get another 5, 10 or 15 lakhs, still the sum total is less than Rs. 37 lakhs of rupees. Why should any firm come forward and give up 37 lakhs in order to make by illicit means Rs. 5, 10 or 15 lakhs. I ask

this. This is common sense. Is it sense that a firm should give up 37 lakhs and make Rs. 5, 10 or 15 lakhs by illicit means when it could, by legitimate and honourable means, make 37 lakhs? The firm has done favour to the Government of Bengal. The allegation on the face of it is absurd. Even a child can see through the game the Opposition is trying to play.

Now, let us examine the method and process adopted in attacks that have been made against Ispahanis. Uptil now, not one instance has been given, not the name of one firm has been quoted, not the name of one person or one place or one transaction has been given as an instance where Ispahanis have purchased rice at a low price and have charged Government a higher price as alleged. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Bihar.) Sir, wild and shifting allegations have been made galore but definite particulars have not been given even in a single instance. Time and again offers have been made by Government that "here are the books of Ispahanis Limited, come along, have a look at them", but those offers have not been accepted, specific instances have not been given. They will not do it they cannot do it—the Opposition know the reason why they cannot accept the challenge but go on repeating these allegations.

Sir, Mr. Suhrawardy will be able to give you more particulars. I can say this much that Messrs. Ispahanis Limited, as far as my report goes, have purchased on an average at a lower rate than any other firm which has sold foodgrains to the Government of Bengal. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: All bunkum.) Let anybody who has business with Government come to me and give me the figures at which he has sold to the Government of Bengal, and I will examine and compare the figures with the figures at which Messrs. Ispahanis Limited have purchased.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I take up the challenge. I will satisfy you that Ispahanis have purchased at a rate two rupees higher than the market price.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Well, the offer is accepted. Let us sit together and see who is right Dr. Sanyal or I.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Tomorrow we shall sit. Where and at what time please?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: In my room in the Assembly.

Then, Sir, as I have said before, in this matter we had the advice of the Regional Commissioner. So far as Ispahanis are concerned, I have made everything sufficiently clear.

Sir, I will now deal with Dr. Mookerjee's points. About price control it is said that things are not being done as they ought to be done. Sir, it is unfortunate that instead of trying to help us, instead of co-operating with us, instead of seeing that the price control is maintained and instead of trying to see that the merchants sell at the controlled rate, the attitude taken up by the Opposition is such that encourages the dealers to hold up

their stocks. (A VOICE: we must first control the supply, then control the price.) Now, it is said that we must ensure the supply first and then control the price. May I say this—that in this House when the price of rice was rising to Rs. 40, Rs. 50 per maund, members said "why don't you control the price?" They demanded price control. How can there be any control of price, if there be no supply? If it is possible to get supplies, what is the necessity for controlling the price? If you can ensure supplies, then there is no necessity for controlling the price. The natural law of supply and demand will work. The difficulty exists because we cannot get the necessary supplies—and we cannot get the supplies because there is deficit. The Opposition cries "why don't you make arrangements for supply?" Sir, it is admitted on the other hand that these gentlemen from the Opposition have been shouting for the last two, three, four, five months that there is absolute deficit and we must have foodgrains from outside. How could supply be made knowing that there is deficit and also knowing that there are no foodgrains sufficient to meet the requirements? We are faced with this proposition. As a matter of fact in the Cabinet meeting, and in our Party meeting, I pointed out that we are running a grave risk by trying to control the price, that there is every likelihood of rice disappearing from the market, but by the grace of God we have not had the situation which we might have had.

Sir, Dr. Mookerjee read out telegrams from only 8 or 9 places. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I can read the rest if you like.) In most of the districts rice is being sold at controlled price though not in any quantity, but in five seers, two seers, one seer lots. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Absolutely false.) You can go to Howrah, you can go to Bogra. (Uproar.)

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the question be now put.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I am naming the districts where you can get rice. (Renewed uproar.)

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: মাননীয় স্পীকার, স্যার, উনি মিথ্যা কথা বলছেন। ঢাকাতে বহু লোক না খেয়ে মারা যাচ্ছে। নাজিমুদ্দীন সাহেবের ঘরে চাল থাকতে পারে, কিন্তু দেশের বহু লোক আজ চাল পাচ্ছে না। .....(noise and disturbances).....

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Zaman, will you kindly resume your seat?

Mr. SAYED AHMED KHAN: On a point of order, মাননীয় স্পীকার সাহেব, আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করি স্যার নাজিমুদ্দীন, মিঃ সারওয়ার্দী এবং সমুদয় মন্ত্রী এবং পার্লামেণ্টারী সেক্রেটারী ও মুসলিম লীগ কোয়ালিশান মেম্বারগণ সকলেই কি ইস্পাহানী কোম্পানির অংশীদার? তাহা না হইলে মন্ত্রী স্যার নাজিমুদ্দীন ও সারওয়ার্দীসহ সকলে কেন উক্ত কোম্পানীর পক্ষে সাফাই গাইছেন। তাহারা বাংলাদেশ লুটে খাচ্ছে। এ দেশের কোটী কোটী লোক না খেয়ে মরছে, তাহারা এ দেশের সর্বনাশকারী.....(noise and disturbances).

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I will now conclude, Sir, by saying that Government is doing its level best to meet the situation and every step that is humanly possible is being taken. (Uproar.)

Mr. SPEAKER: It is already past six and I do not think there will be any time today for the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy to speak. When the food debate will come up, he will have an opportunity to speak.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, I would have liked to reply to the rather constructive comments that were made by Mr. Kennedy, my friend Mr. Narendra Nath Das Gupta and the Maharaja of Cossimbazar. I have been following the speeches of all the members very carefully and I would have liked to speak on those points. But as there is going to be another food debate and these gentlemen will have another innings then I shall have a chance to reply.

Mr. R. HAYWOOD: Sir, I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

The motion of Mr. R. Haywood that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then by leave of the House withdrawn.

Mr. I. G. KENNEDY: Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the motion standing in my name.

The motion of Mr. I. G. Kennedy that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then by leave of the House withdrawn.

The motion of Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerji that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerji that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerji that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Sreejut Narendra Nath Das Gupta that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion moved by Mr. J. C. Gupta that the demand of Rs. 5,44,34,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The main motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 5,44,34,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" was then put and agreed to.

The motion of Maharaja Srish Chandra Nandy, of Cossimbazar that the demand of Rs. 50,00,000 for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 50,00,000 for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital Outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and a division called, with the following result:—

AYES—78.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khaitan, Mr. Debi Prosad.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Mahtab, Maharajadhiraja Bahadur, Uday Chand, of Burdwan.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherjee, Mr. B.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nandy, Maharaja Srischandra, of Cossimbazar.
Naskar, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—116.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rashid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.

Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hamiduddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hodge, Mr. H. R.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. B.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McGregor, Mr. G. G.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mahzuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Miles, Mr. C. W.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, The Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, The Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Pain, The Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, The Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.
Zillur Rahman Shah Chowdhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 78 and the Noes 116, the motion was lost.

The main demand of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy that a sum of Rs. 50,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6-18 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Friday, the 24th September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Friday, the 24th September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 189 members.

STARRED QUESTION

(to which oral answer was given)

Grant-in-aid to the P. K. College, Contai.

***85. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the grant-in-aid of the P. K. College, Contai, district Midnapore, has been discontinued?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the district authority recommended to the Government the imposition of certain conditions on the Managing Committee of the said college?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the conditions imposed on the Managing Committee?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the college authority have made any representation to the Government for the continuance of the grant-in-aid?

(*f*) If the answer to (*e*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the steps taken by the Government in the matter?

(*g*) If the answer to (*f*) is in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of continuing the grant-in-aid?

MINISTER in charge of the EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*) Yes, the grant has been temporarily withheld.

(*b*) The District Magistrate reported that the college had taken a prominent part in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

(*c*) No such recommendation has been received by Government.

(*d*) Does not arise.

(*e*) and (*f*) Yes, the representation has been forwarded to the District Magistrate for his observations.

(*g*) Does not arise.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether anyone connected with the institution—student or staff—was prosecuted on any specific charges?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I want notice.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what does he mean by "college"—whether he means students, staff or the Managing Committee of the college?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: College connotes students as well as the staff.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the nature of the action alleged to have been committed by the college in connection with the movement?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: They took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that the threat of stoppage of the grant-in-aid of this college was held out by the District Magistrate long before the Civil Disobedience Movement started?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I have no such information

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact or whether the Hon'ble Minister in charge is aware that long before the movement of August, 1942, the District Magistrate of Midnapore wanted two members of the staff to be retained on the staff of the college as against the desire of the Managing Committee to which the Managing Committee having disagreed, the District Magistrate threatened withholding of the grant of the college?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I am not aware of it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in course of an arbitration proceeding before the University Arbitration Committee at the instance of two of the members of the staff who were dismissed by the Managing Committee the fact was revealed that the District Magistrate wanted those two members to be retained and the Managing Committee was threatened that in case they were not retained, the grant of the college will be withheld?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I do not know what took place in the University.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the representation was received by the Government and when it has been forwarded to the District Magistrate?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I want notice for the dates.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the grant was withheld?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: The grant was withheld some time after the movement of August, 1942.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not a fact. You do not know.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: In 1942. That is a fact.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, but before the movement.

Mr. SPEAKER: It may or it may not be. He is not in a position to say.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SHANYAL: He has no files. He will talk off-hand and talk nonsense.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Did Government on receipt of the Magistrate's report satisfy themselves as to the allegations made against the institution?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I think my predecessor satisfied himself before he passed orders.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to let us know which members of the staff took part in the movement.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I want notice.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to let us know if any intimation or threat was made to the College Council by the Government saying "Your staff and students are taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement"?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I do not know if anything was done by the District Magistrate but so far as Government is concerned, nothing like that was communicated to the College Council.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In view of the revelation now made, will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of making fresh enquiries as to whether the ban—I call it a ban—has been rightly imposed?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I have already answered that the representation that was received has been sent to the District Magistrate for enquiry and report.

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answer to which was laid on the table)

Transfer of security prisoner Mr. Nani Swami Purkayastha.

31. Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware that—

(*i*) Mr. Nani Swami Purkayastha, a resident of village Latu, police-station Karimgunge, district Sylhet, in the Province of Assam, was arrested in Calcutta and has been detained as a security prisoner in the Alipore Central Jail since 2nd October, 1942; and

(*ii*) he has submitted several petitions praying for his transfer to his own district jail in Assam?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*)(*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action, if any, he has taken or proposes to take in the matter?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) He submitted one petition.

(*b*) His prayer has been rejected.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason for rejecting his petition?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is not in the public interest to disclose the reasons for rejection of the petition.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADYAY: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that his relations are in Assam and they find great difficulty in interviewing the security prisoner?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: His relations are in Assam—that is true.

Question relating to Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Whip of our party gave notice of a question regarding Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose about his release, repatriation, health and other amenities. In view of the outstanding importance of the matter may I enquire of the Home Minister through you as to how the question stands and whether it will be possible for him to answer the question in course of this session?

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Home Minister can give any information, that is another matter. So far as the Assembly Department office is concerned, if you want any information you will see me in my chamber.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: I have nothing to say about the department. I am enquiring of the Home Minister through you.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I have not come across this question yet. There are a few questions pending but as far as this particular question is concerned, I am afraid this is a matter which is not within the primary responsibility of the Provincial Government.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: With regard to the framing of this question the questioner was perfectly alive to the limitations of the Government and certain information has been asked for as to what this Government has done in the matter of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose relating to his repatriation to the province, relating to his release, relating to his health and relating to the amenities for his family. Certainly they can ask all these matters. These are within the provincial fold and we would be very much obliged if Government were in a position to answer those portions of the question which are within their direct responsibility and jurisdiction.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I will make an enquiry and, if possible, before the session ends, I will try to answer the question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I invited your attention to a short notice question handed over to the Secretary on Monday last and you were pleased to assure me that every possible expedition would be done in your office. You said that the Secretary was quite alive to it and, Sir, following that assurance I got yesterday a letter, dated the 23rd September, 1943, which shows that it was on the 23rd only that the short notice question was forwarded to the department concerned. This question related to the appointment of Food and Civil Supplies Commissioner, Bengal, Mr. Stevens, and, Sir, in spite of great expedition and efficiency of your office, it took them three days to send a simple question which had no complication to the department concerned. If short notice questions are treated in this way in your office, I do not know how to accuse Government for having failed to give a reply within a reasonable time, because the Extraordinary Charges Demand was taken up yesterday.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I hope you will realise the difficulty through which the Assembly Department is passing.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir. I do not realise. I realise that they are an inefficient lot and that an enquiry should be made.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am telling you is this: I hope you will realise that what used to be done in more than one month's time is going to be done in the course of a few days. We are compelled to do it under the existing circumstances. You will realise that at least.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That disadvantage is ours and not of the office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Don't you realise how many questions we have got to go into in the course of this short time and how many cut motions?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is your difficulty It is not the difficulty of office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly office has got certain difficulties. However, I will look into the matter. This is all that I can say.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: If a simple short notice question takes from 20th to 23rd to pass out of your office, then we are helpless. If in a short session of 7 days three days are exhausted in the Secretary's office where is the chance of our getting replies?

Mr. SPEAKER: It was submitted on the 20th?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps it may have been delayed on my table. I do not know. So I have got to look into the matter.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: May I be permitted to enquire through you as to what has been the fate of a short notice question which I gave notice of. The question relates to a very important matter. It refers to the fact that family allowance has been withheld from some security prisoners for 5 or 6 months in some districts. I have an intimation from your office that the question has been sent to the department concerned. It is about 5 or six days back. I do not know whether Government intend to give reply to that question.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not for me to say.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The reply to that short notice question has already been sent to the Assembly Department.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Another question was handed over on the 14th and I got a note from your department that it was sent to the department concerned on the 21st.

Mr. SPEAKER: It took seven days! Was it a short notice question?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It was an ordinary question and not a short notice question.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, I draw your attention to the non-reply of questions. We find that questions put during a session are not invariably replied, (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: They are not sent to Government) not to speak of questions which were put during the last session and the session before last.

Mr. SPEAKER: The whole matter is under examination.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We tried our best, but no improvement could be effected. Today we have got only two questions. There are 17 Parliamentary Secretaries who cannot even handle the files and come prepared to answer the questions properly. There must be something wrong either in your office or in the Government departments concerned.

Mr. SPEAKER: So far as my office is concerned, I may give you this assurance that I will enquire into this matter and if any matter is found pending in my office, I will announce it tomorrow.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

27—Administration of Justice.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 75,12,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice".

Mr. SHAHED ALI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the transfer of the subordinate court of the 3rd Sub-Judge from the district headquarters to Chandpur.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this connection I must say that I had also two other cut motions, one under "Land Revenue" and another under "General Administration" with regard to the transfer of headquarters from Comilla to Brahmanbaria. Unless those two cut motions are read along with this one, the full implication will not be understood. Recently, Sir, for military purposes a portion of the town of Comilla including the Civil and the Criminal Courts had been requisitioned by the military and as a result the courts were transferred to some other place, and we understand the Civil Court, the Judge's Court, the subordinate courts, the Additional District Magistrate's court and other courts have been transferred to Brahmanbaria. Some of the civil courts and criminal courts were transferred to Barkamta and others to Laksam. I want to know from the Minister for whose benefit this transfer has been made. Military do not want the transfer of the courts from one place to another. So far as the village people are concerned, they do not like it. Only three bodies are interested in this affair, firstly, Government, second, the litigants and thirdly the lawyers. From the Government point of view this transfer to Brahmanbaria would involve them into a huge expenditure on their part. At present there is no arrangement for light, there is no arrangement for water, and I understand Government have proposed to erect some huts at Medda for the lawyers about two or three miles from the civil court. It will not be possible for the lawyers to come from such a distance, and it will be very difficult for them to attend the court punctually.

Secondly, Sir, from the lawyers' point of view there was a telegram from the President of the Comilla Bar Association to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal to this effect that they want that the Civil Court should remain somewhere in Comilla, if possible in the neighbourhood of Comilla and not anywhere else. Thirdly, from the litigants' point of view they do not want that it should be transferred to Brahmanbaria. It may be very difficult for the sadar people and some other people to go to the other extremity of the district and conduct cases there.

Next, Sir, there is a court at Chandpur which is known as "old Civil Court" and that court has sufficient accommodation to make room for the Judge's Court and the subordinate courts and other courts at Chandpur. Moreover, you know, Sir, that the Chandpur municipality is a bigger municipality than the Comilla municipality. So much so that the income of the Chandpur municipality is double the income of the Comilla municipality. I do not know why the district headquarters have been transferred to Brahmanbaria. A few influential people might have done this, but I must say that the interests of the people, the interests of the litigants and the interests of the lawyers should be foremost in the minds of the Government

in transferring the headquarters. Some of the Criminal and Civil Courts have been transferred to Barkamta and some to Laksam. My request to Government is this. There is no dearth of place in the district. It may be at Barkamta or it may be at Laksam. It does not matter where. All the Civil Courts including the Judge's court and the subordinate courts and the courts of the Additional District Magistrate may be transferred to Laksam. The expenditure of the Govrnment will be less and there will not be want of drinking water and there is also light connection. So Laksam will be a good place for the Government. If for any reasons they are unwilling to transfer the courts to Laksam then they may transfer them to Barkamta which is also a very good place. There is ample accommodation for all the courts there. If Government want to minimise expenditure more they can have all these courts transferred to Chandpur and preferably to Ghorashal where there is ample space for accommodation of all the courts. I want to ask what is the good of subdividing all the courts and what is the good of transferring the courts to three distinct and different places. That is harmful to the pleaders, that is injurious to the litigants and that is also not very beneficial to Government. Even the local representatives in the Legislature in their capacities as M.L.A.'s or M.L.C.'s were not called by the District Magistrate or the District Judge to have their opinion in this matter. Some of the M.L.A.'s and M.L.C.'s might have been called in their private capacity and they might have given advice to the District Magistrate or to the District Judge for their own self-interest. They had not the interest of the litigants or of the public in their minds. I request the Government to look into the whole case anew and see whether all the courts can be transferred to one place to Laksam, Barkamta, Kasba or any other place. It is for the good of the people and it is for the good of the litigants that I am making this appeal to Government.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir——.

Mr. A. F. STARK: On a point of order, Sir. I beg to submit that this cut motion standing in the name of my honourable and learned friend is out of order in so far as it seeks to discuss the conduct of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court. My honourable friend with his usual skill has attempted to circumvent the provisions of section 86 of the Government of India Act.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Thank you, you realise that.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Section 86 of the Government of India Act says that there shall be no discussion of the conduct of a judge of the High Court in the discharge of his duties. Now, Sir, I submit that the point is whether the Chief Justice was or was not acting as a judge, and in this case I do not see there can be any doubt on that point. He was making a judgment in the High Court when he made the observations referred to in the cut motion. I would submit further that it is no business of this House whether a judge is rightly or wrongly discharging his duties or whether he has even exceeded his duties. We cannot go into those questions, if he was acting as a judge. I would submit, Sir, that it would create a very undesirable and very wrong

precedent if we in this House were to adopt the practice of discussing the actions of judges acting as judges whether they were doing their duties rightly or wrongly or even in excess of their duties.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Stark, does your argument apply to both parts of the motion?

Mr. A. F. STARK: I was arguing on the second part.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have got nothing to say with regard to the first part.

Mr. A. F. STARK: No.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With regard to the point of order which has been raised I beg to submit that the motion as it has been worded is entirely within the four corners of the Rules of Procedure of this House and of the provisions of the Government of India Act. I am glad that even the very vigilant Whip of the Government Party has not been able to discover at least in the first part of my motion any irregularity——

Mr. SPEAKER: He is the Whip of the European Party.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir. They are the dictators of Government.

Mr. A. F. STARK: I protest against that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am grateful to Mr. Stark for that much concession. With regard to the second part my submission is this: That the Government of India Act clearly contemplates criticism by the public and also specially by the Legislature of even the conduct of a person placed in the position of the highest judicial office if he does anything which does not seemingly and apparently come within the functions and duties of his office. The wording of section 86 is this that no discussion shall take place in a Provincial Legislature with respect to the conduct of any judge of the Federal Court or the High Court in the discharge of his duties. So, it will then lie on merely the question of fact as to whether in this particular case the observations made or the conduct displayed by the Chief Justice was really in the course of discharging his judicial duties. I submit Sir, that this question again has to be approached from three angles of view. The first angle is this. As you are very well aware the ordinary citizen outside, the public and the Press have got every right to criticise and examine judgments delivered by the courts. So long as cases are *sub judice* they might not discuss the same because of the fear of infringing the rules and laws regarding contempt of court. But after judgment is delivered the ordinary public outside have a right to criticise the judgment. Sir, it could never be contemplated that the House, this Legislature and the members thereof will have some privilege much less than what the public outside have got. The public outside have got the right and the privilege to criticise the judgment and in the course of such criticisms to examine also the conduct of the judge. I do not see any reason how that particular privilege granted to ordinary citizens outside could be withheld from members of the Legislature.

The second point is that Sir Harold Derbyshire, the Chief Justice of Bengal, has in the course of trying a certain case taken two steps, one is the constitution of the Special Bench itself and the second is the judicial proceedings of the Special Bench. So far as the actual constitution of the Bench is concerned, that is an administrative act and not a judicial act and the conduct displayed by the Chief Justice in forming that Special Bench under very peculiar circumstances——

Mr. SPEAKER: We are now discussing the point of order, Dr. Sanyal, and you need not dilate upon what part you can discuss and what part you cannot discuss; for that is a subject for me, and if you go outside the limit then I will certainly call you to order. So, do not please drag in all these points now. What have you got to say with regard to the point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I will not make any attempt to explain in detail the various points in view of your present ruling. For the first two points of view, there is nothing which can prevent me as an ordinary citizen outside this Legislature from discussing the conduct of a High Court Judge. With regard to the conduct even, if in the course of sitting on the bench a Judge throws a missile at any lawyer, if he takes something from his table and commits a criminal act, that position will not protect him because although he was sitting on the Chair of the Chief Justice that was not a part of his functions and duties. With regard to this second part in this particular case, Sir, I am not at the present moment in a position to state to the House what particular aspect of the conduct of Sir Harold Derbyshire I am going to raise through this cut motion, but unless in the course of my observations something is stated or is sought to be stated which go to show that I am infringing section 86 of the Government of India Act by trying to raise particular questions relating to his conduct in the course of the discharge of the duties of the Chief Justice, I do not think you can really rule me out of order at this stage. Later on at a subsequent stage if you really find that I am going beyond my limits you can call me to order.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Sir, section 86 of the Government of India Act is known to us all.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: No; it is not known to us all.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Those who are here ought to know it. If the main provisions of the Government of India Act are not known to any member of this Assembly, it is better for him to quit.

Sir, my point is that this section 86 of the Government of India Act has restrained the power of this Legislature from discussing certain matters relating to courts of law. This Legislature is a creature of the Government of India Act which prevents it from discussing certain matters. I do not know how that matter can be discussed here. A child cannot go against the wishes of its parent. So I say when our rights and privileges have been curtailed what we can say outside this Chamber we cannot say here. So long as this provision in section 86 is there I do not know how you can raise this

question. I know that Dr. Sanyal is trying to avoid provision of section 86 of the Government of India Act and make out a case that the Judge's remarks on Mr. Huq's conduct were not made in discharge of his duties as a Judge, but as far as I have read the case I know that in the circumstances in which the Judges were induced to pass certain remarks I cannot hold them responsible——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We do not want your judgment on the Judiciary or on the judgment of the Chief Justice.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: But I do not hold him responsible for his conduct and I have a right to say that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is our business, not yours.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: But as a member of this House I stand on my right to express my views.

Sir, the position is this. I know at this stage he has not yet made out his case and we do not know what you will decide on this point. In case, Sir, you allow him to make a speech on this motion then at a later stage if he says a word infringing on the relevant section of the Government of India Act, I will seek your help to stop him.

Mr. SPEAKER: This point of order raises an issue of great constitutional importance, but I do not think it will be necessary for me today, while giving my ruling on the specific motion concerned, to give an interpretation of section 86 of the Government of India Act; at any rate, a comprehensive interpretation.

I am just now called upon to give a ruling as to whether or not the second part of Dr. Sanyal's cut motion, namely, the conduct of Sir Harold Derbyshire who holds the office of the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in so far as he indulged in certain observations regarding Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, the ex-Premier, and Mr. Syed Badruddoja, the Mayor of Calcutta, not at all required in the discharge of his duties is in order. Now, this is the matter that is before us. The point is whether this should be allowed or not. Now, before I give my definite ruling on this point, I should only say one word with regard to the question why this should be allowed or should not be allowed. Now it is conceded and it is provided in section 71 of the Government of India Act that members of this House have got freedom of speech. Section 86 enacts an exception to that general rule. Therefore, it appears to me that unless we can bring any motion within the mischief of section 86, it should be allowed. Therefore, in interpreting section 86, I shall always be inclined to interpret it in a very restrictive way because, otherwise, it will encroach upon the rights of the members of this House. But even interpreting the section in that way if I find that the present motion still comes within the mischief of that section, certainly I shall have no other option but to disallow it. Now what does this motion seek to bring to the notice of the House and bring under the discussion of the House?—the conduct of Sir Harold Derbyshire who holds the office of the Chief Justice of the

Calcutta High Court. Therefore, his conduct as the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in so far as he indulged—I lay stress upon the word "indulged"—in certain observations regarding Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq and so on,—this evidently refers to the observations made by Sir Harold Derbyshire as the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in a judgment about Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq and Dr. Sanyal was conscious that this conduct of Sir Harold Derbyshire would come within the mischief of section 86 and therefore what he wanted to do was to indicate that this was not necessary in the discharge of his duties and therefore it was outside the jurisdiction as a Judge of the High Court. I am sorry I cannot allow a motion of this nature because if I do allow a motion of this nature the result of it will be that members will come forward and say that this part or that part of a judgment was not in discharge of his duties as a Judge. I regret such an interpretation is not permissible under section 86 of the Act. Therefore I regretfully disallow the second part of this motion.

But before I leave this question I have also got to say a word or two with regard to the first part and also with regard to the speech that may be generally given on this subject. Otherwise I may have at every stage to jump up and interrupt members in the discussion. In my opinion it is open to every member of this House to discuss under this head judicial matters even generally for the purpose of the improvement of the administration of justice in the province. Secondly, it is open to every member of this House to discuss matters which do not come within the conduct of a Judge in the discharge of his duties as such. In the third place it is open, in my opinion, to every member of this House to discuss judgments once pronounced—the merits, the procedure and everything relating to that judgment—without casting any reflection upon any judge, I mean, without casting any personal reflection upon the judge who pronounced that judgment, and I think it will be desirable that in doing so the remarks made about the highest judiciary in the land should be couched in proper and respectful language. These are the general observations that I should like to make here.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The language that he deserves.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: The language befitting the dignity of the highest legislature within the province.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the situation created through the setting aside of the conviction of Mr. R. C. Pollard, Superintendent of Police, Murshidabad, on a charge of assaulting one lawyer at Berhampore, and through the issuing of orders for the retrial of the accused in what is known as the Jiaganj rice-looting case.

Sir, during a previous debate on the budget for the Administration of Justice it was my privilege to invite the attention of Government to the sad spectacle of continued deterioration in the respect commanded by the

highest judiciary of this province, and on that occasion I explained within the short space of time that was available to me then the main reasons for such deterioration in the respect commanded by the High Court. Hardly three or four months have elapsed from that time and we have had an exhibition which has practically placed whatever little prestige the High Court had in a coffin and the highest custodian of the prestige and privileges of that court has put on that coffin the last nails. Although he is holding that office, as one eminent countryman of ours had put it, high offices are being held by persons not fit to hold the offices of clerks of burial grounds, but that highest officer, although not fit to hold the office of a clerk in a burial ground, has put the nails in the coffin of the High Court quite efficiently and ably. And how, Sir? Here was a case of one white impetuous Superintendent of Police having exceeded the bounds of criminal law and assaulted a lawyer who went to his office with a view to represent an accused temporarily in his custody. The lowest court in the trial convicted that Police Superintendent; the lowest court was presided over by an Indian Magistrate. The District Judge to whom appeal was made rejected the appeal. References were made to the High Court and at the direction of the High Court a special trial or revision or appeal was allowed in another district and there also the learned District Judge of that place upheld the conviction of the lower court, and not only did uphold the conviction but made most solemn observations about the conduct of the Superintendent of Police in that case. Sir, the dovecots of white bureaucracy at once began to flutter——

Mr. A. F. STARK: On a point of order, Sir. My honourable and learned friend yesterday appealed to you to stop communal issues being brought into the debate when my honourable friend Mr. Siddiqi was speaking. Today, Sir, my honourable friend is importing racial issues. I would appeal to you, Sir, to request him to refrain from it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, try to state facts.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I was trying to avoid names. In view of the observations made by you I shall now try to give the names. When this Mr. R. C. Pollard sought the protection of the Secretariat the first protection that he received was in the hands of the learned Legal Remembrancer who is a member of the European community and he allowed Mr. R. C. Pollard to be defended at Government cost. Even after the conviction, when the appeal was put in, Government cost was insisted upon and after reference in this House the then Minister in charge of the Judicial Department who was an Indian at that time—even now Indian Ministers are holding the portfolio fortunately—thought that it was not proper that Government should find costs but if at a later stage it was necessary Government might examine the issue afresh. Subsequently it was found that this Mr. Pollard was being given undue patronage and privilege by two other officers of Government, both members of the European community—one the Deputy Inspector-General and the other the Additional Secretary of the Government of Bengal. Although

repeated attempts were made by members of the public to bring to the notice of Government the utter impropriety of retaining the Superintendent of Police in the place while he was actually convicted of a criminal offence and while it was also submitted to Government that this Superintendent of Police had become notorious in regard to such conduct, the Indian members of the Ministry tried to do justice to the people, but some members of the Services including possibly the highest in the State, so far as Bengal is concerned, all belonging to the European community, stood in the way.

Sir, the unfortunate situation created through the judgment of the High Court is this. It was immediately on that very evening that an evening party in honour of the so-called acquittal of Mr. Pollard was given in the Grand Hotel attended by some members of the Indian Civil Service and members of the Indian Police Service. There was a great jubilation and a telegram was sent from Calcutta to the district and a reception was organised by a few henchmen of this Superintendent of Police at the Railway Station. Before this, the Indian Magistrate who is a Mussalman or belonging to the Muslim community was sought to be transferred peremptorily from the place and I have definite information that he was transferred at the insistence and instance of Mr. R. C. Pollard. It was through the intervention of the then Chief Minister that this piece of abject interference with the independence of the Magistracy was stopped The situation in the district today is, as a result of this judicial pronouncement, a complete collapse of the independence of the judiciary. Mr. R. C. Pollard thinks that he is above law, he can do anything and he knows that whatever Indian Magistrates may do he will ultimately get scot free so long as his kith and kin are there in higher offices. And what was the position? The position arose in course of the case referred to in which Mr. Satyagopal Majumdar was assaulted. The case was a simple one; it was an ordinary case of simple assault by one person on another leading to the conviction of the accused and fine of Rs. 250 and just because a certain important member of a certain office was involved in it, belonging to the European community, the highest judicial authority thought fit to constitute a special bench constituted of a friend of that very accused—a member of the European community again—and another convenient person. Three Judges were made to constitute a special bench, and this special bench was constituted after dissolving the already existing special bench that could take up this case in the ordinary course of business, if necessary. But that previous special bench, unfortunately for the highest wisdom of the High Court, was composed of two Indian Judges of unimpeachable reputation, and therefore the result was obvious.

In course of trial, certain documents were discovered. What a wonderful discovery? And a special doctorate should be awarded to the learned Judges of the High Court having got the vision to see things beyond vision and they got certain files from the dovecots of the Secretariat dug out. And lo! and behold! what they discovered was a serious attempt to interfere with the administration of justice in the province! It was

for the first time perhaps that the Judges came to know that executive officers have a right, and not only a right, but also a privilege to address the local executive officers regarding executive matters. It was a discovery that the Chief Minister and Home Minister in the province was trying to enquire from the local District Magistrate the circumstances of a particular case and pending the time that would take him to get the file examined to request that officer for a postponement—nothing beyond that. Postponements at the instance of the executive are not for the first time coming to the notice of the High Court. The High Court, only a few months ago, came across another series of postponements which went up to the extent of postponement *sine die*,—one interesting case at Asansol, the Kulti Rioting case—and withdrawal of cases at the instance of the executive are not also quite unknown leading or finally leading to the withdrawal of all the cases in connection with the Dacca riots. Withdrawal took place in another famous case of Natore in which one Muslim League preacher Tarkabagish was an accused and at the instance of the Secretariat the criminal case against that blessed protagonist of the Muslim League was withdrawn. Thus, nothing new or unusual was done by the Chief Minister in seeking to know the circumstances under which a particular case was sought to be conducted. I am, Sir, debarred by your ruling from entering into or even naming the particular case which goes by the name of the Jiagunge Rice Looting case. Nothing more ridiculous could have happened. The impression has been given to the country that it was a most heinous offence of some dacoity which the Chief Minister of Bengal was trying to hush up because of some consideration. The case was reported and discussed on the floor of the House and it was pointed out on the floor of the House how an abuse of the Special Courts Ordinance II of 1942 was being indulged in in this case.

A few young men at the request of the local Subdivisional Officer tried to keep a watch on the surreptitious removal of rice from that area to help the local people to retain their food in the place. That was the wonderful occasion for an alleged rice looting case. And in that case what happened? The Deputy Inspector-General, Criminal Investigation Department, wanted it to be tried by a Special Magistrate. That is no interference! When the Deputy Inspector-General, Criminal Investigation Department, got the headquarters officers to demand of the Magistracy "Look here you cannot get the case tried by an ordinary court. You must have it transferred to a Special Court Magistrate", and the local Magistrate had to do it. That is no interference! That interference again was sought to be made under an illegal piece of law. Yet the learned Chief Justice of the High Court could not see into that aspect of the question at all; nor could he see anything wrong in Mr. Pollard's own conduct. The case——

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: The Jiaganj Rice Looting case is *sub judice*.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am only mentioning the name of the case. I am not discussing it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please don't go into the merits of the case.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I bow to your ruling. As a matter of fact I am not speaking fast enough as I am used to, only to be very careful about my words.

With regard to Mr. Pollard's own conduct nothing is said in the judgment. The learned Chief Justice expresses some lip sympathy for the assaulted lawyer and he hopes piously that if an application is made by him to the local Government, the local Government might give him the necessary sanction under section 197. And what does he order? He orders that the case must not be tried in Murshidabad. He thinks he gives a great privilege to the complainant, Mr. Satya Gopal Mazumdar when he wants the case to be tried at Hooghly. Government is going to find all the costs of Mr. R. C. Pollard whether it is at Hooghly or at Timbuctoo. So far as poor Satya Gopal Mazumdar is concerned he had to fight his case right through single handed from the lowest court right up to the highest at his own cost.

Mr. M. A. H. ISPAHANI: Out of Mahasabha money?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It is not as cheap as the Muslim League money or the money coming from Ispahani charities. Mr. Satya Gopal Mazumdar has to go to Hooghly and take all his witnesses to Hooghly at his own cost with a great deal of inconvenience to everybody. It is not unlikely that with the great influence which some of these executive officers hold the case may not be taken up in the Hooghly court on the 1st day. It may be postponed from day to day; lawyers will have to come, litigants will have to bring their witnesses and so on and they will have to go back as usual with all courts because they will remain busy and thus will poor Satya Gopal Mazumdar get a very fair trial at the hands of an independent man in a different district! This is a wonderful piece of judicial discovery and, Sir, what is all this due to? It is due to a suspicion that the then Hon'ble Chief Minister who was also the Home Minister of the Province sought to teach this man whose conduct had been highly reprehensible a proper lesson. The suspicion is there expressed in the words of the Chief Justice in the judgment itself. And why should he not? Three letters were sent. The letters were there and they were read out. Nothing objectionable could be found in the body of the letters. One letter merely asked the local District Magistrate to acquaint the Chief Minister-*cum*-Home Minister of the Province with the circumstances of the case and pending his application of mind to the position to get it postponed by a few weeks. The second and 3rd letters made repeated exhortations to that Magistrate to do justice and fair-play and not in any way to allow any other influence to enter there and it was, Sir, done under peculiar circumstances. I take the fullest responsibility for what I said in this connection because I had intimate knowledge of the affairs of this case. The local District Magistrate is a very intelligent, honest, God-fearing and fair-minded officer. He found that the Police Superintendent

was exceeding his limits and he did not give the Police Superintendent the privilege that he was demanding every time. The Police Superintendent went up to the Secretariat through his chief and wrote confidential notes disparaging the local magistracy. In one of the notes he went to the extent of saying "I find even members of the Indian Civil Service have lost the sense as to how to keep the British domination in this province." Letters were written to Mr. Wright, the Deputy Inspector-General, where he pointed out the manner in which he was not being allowed freedom enough to give proper lesson or chastise the people in the manner he thought necessary, and representations were made to the Secretariat to see that the local Magistrate, the trying Magistrate and others concerned with the Administration of Justice and the executive authority there might be made subservient to the local police. As a matter of fact in many respects they have been so. But the Chief Minister of the Province——

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, you have already taken up much time.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I was interrupted two or three times.

Mr. SPEAKER: There are other speakers on your side.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Only one. Please give me 5 minutes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Five minutes will be too long. Try to finish early.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Pollard tried to defy all local officers and when this matter was brought to the notice of the then Divisional Commissioner in one of the interviews that I had with him he admitted that he was disgusted with the conduct of the police officer and he had reported against him to Government, but that he was helpless because some other authority was not doing anything.

Sir, on one occasion when I was waiting in the house of the District Magistrate of Murshidabad I found Mr. Pollard exchanging hot words with the District Magistrate so much so that I was afraid that they would come to blows, and as a matter of fact it was over a very interesting incident. One very reputed local gentleman, Rai Bahadur Anil Chatterjee, who was the head of the local civic guards was being chastised by Mr. R. C. Pollard and the two were arguing one against the other over a very petty matter. I would not like to go into details. (Derisive laughter from the European Benches.) Would you like to know, it is very interesting, it will be very helpful. It is this: The local civic guard commandant wanted to have better equipment for civic guards and he made certain selections of civic guards from amongst respectable young men. Mr. Pollard would have his own nominees and he said that unless the other acceded to his request he would not supply the equipment and the necessary rations of civic guards. The civic guard commandant tendered his resignation as a result of the dispute. The Superintendent of Police threatened to arrest the civic guard commandant and the District Magistrate said "You cannot arrest him like that". He said "I can on a small pettifogging case tomorrow", and that very morning after half

an hour his car was stopped by a local police constable on the charge that he was driving without a licence. From his pocket the licence was produced. The police said: "No, no, I have orders to take you to the thana. You can prove your case later on". The civic guard commandant went to the house of the Subdivisional Officer and personally presenting the licence said "Look here, I am being arrested like this". The Subdivisional Officer said: "I may give you bail on personal security, but the case I cannot stop because the police will have another case started against you". This is the conduct of the blessed Police Superintendent not against political persons but against one who is supposed to be one of the pillars of Government—a Rai Bahadur: he was commandant of the civic guard. The position had been deplorable, and after the judgment expressed in the High Court the situation has deteriorated so much that no fair work in the district is possible. There are yet several cases hanging against this man. I implore the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial Department to see that justice is done to the people when he is in charge at least and at least let Mr. Pollard take his trial as an ordinary citizen: let him be bereft of all his power and privileges, and then we will see how he stands the scrutiny of a trial as a humble citizen for all the misdeeds and acts of vandalism he has committed.

In this connection I would like to bring it to the notice of the highest judicial officer of the Government that let him not try to bring down the prestige of himself and the High Court, for if once people lose their respect for the court of law what will happen? The British Government is existing here not necessarily out of sheer might but for some respect for the British law and their sense of justice. Let that not be completely shaken: it has already been shaken too much but let it not be completely destroyed.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the general policy of the Government—

(*i*) in trifling with the decisions of the Judges when they do not fit in with the executive fiat;

(*ii*) as to the method of recruitment of the Judicial Officers, specially of the Munsiffs;

(*iii*) in the absence of any control of the officers after once they had been appointed and consequent absence of any method to put a stop to the vagaries of the officers;

(*iv*) to bring in political considerations even in the appointment of High Court Judges; and

(*v*) as to the low pay of the lower grade ministerial officers both civil and criminal and as to the high pay of highly paid officers.

Sir, I stand here to draw the attention of the House to the disgraceful fact that the administration of justice becomes a farce when the decisions of the judges do fit in with the executive fiat. A person, however highly

placed he may be, if he is arrested and is placed on trial before a judge and the judge finds him not guilty and consequently his decision is not to the liking of the executive,—that person is at once re-arrested within the precincts of the court under the Defence of India Rules. If a judge releases a person on bail pending the trial and if this order is not to the liking of the executive, that person will be re-arrested in front of the jail gate under the comprehensive Defence of India Rules. Sir, if a person is arrested under the Defence of India Rules, the executive wants that he should be convicted; a charge is framed against him and he is placed on trial and is convicted. Sir, if the decision of the court is that certain sections of the Defence of India Rules are illegal and *ultra vires* and even if that decision is upheld by the highest judiciary of the land but if that is not to the liking of the executive, a mighty Ordinance is issued by His Excellency the Governor-General of India declaring that the sentences of convictions that are passed are legal and not *ultra vires*. Sir, that is the way in which the Government are trying to legalise these convictions. Such is the situation that is really going on with regard to the administration of justice when it does not fit in with the executive fiat. Sir, I refrain from referring to the conduct of the police and of the executive when persons who are set at liberty were at once arrested by taking recourse to the old Regulation. My friend Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal has referred to the conduct of the executive. It is useless to refer to the observations of the executive judges, but, Sir, allow me to refer to the weighty observations of Lord Atkin in a case, which is a well-known case and a recent case, in which Sir John Anderson was a party. Lord Atkin said: "I view with apprehension the attitude of the Judges who, on a mere pretence of construction, when face to face with claims involving the liberty of the subject, showed themselves more executive-minded than the executive."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will now turn to the method of recruitment of judicial officers. Formerly the judicial officers were recruited after they had put in practice for three years after having graduated in law. But now that system has been done away with and a graduate in law becomes a munsiff all at once. The previous system of having three years' practice as a lawyer having been done away with, a munsiff at the time of his recruitment has now practically no experience in the ways and means of the law courts. I submit, Sir, and I appeal to the Government that that system should be revived. A graduate in law should not suddenly become a munsiff but he must have at least some years' practice in the law courts.

Then, Sir, I submit that a committee must be appointed in the district to deal with corruption and bribery in the law courts and the committee must be appointed not only to deal with bribery and corruption in the law courts but also to deal with the vagaries of the judicial officers. In this country, after once the appointment has been made there is no system to deal with the vagaries of judicial officers. Therefore, I submit that a committee must be appointed to deal with such vagaries of the judicial officers.

Then, Sir, with reference to clause (*iv*) I shall refer to one instance.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit.)

Sir, as my time is up, before I sit down I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the miserable condition of the low-paid ministerial officers and to the fact as to how these low-paid officers are living their lives.

With these few words, Sir, I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of the motion is to raise a discussion about the recent judicial pronouncement by Sir Charles Harold Derbyshire, Chief Justice, Calcutta High Court, about Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, ex-Chief Minister, Bengal, in connection with what is known as the Jiagunj Rice Looting Case.

Sir, I expected that no opposition would be forthcoming from the Government to this motion. When have they, the Government, learnt to be so respectful to the High Court—I do not know. Recently they have gone the length of flouting the judgment of the High Court in the matter of detention of security prisoners in spite of its ruling to the contrary.

Sir, my motion refers to some observations made by the Chief Justice about the ex-Chief Minister. What was the case?—A police officer of the name of R. C. Pollard was charged with an offence of an extraordinary nature, namely, that he assaulted a respectable lawyer of Berhampore. The case was tried in the Subdivisional Officer's court which convicted and sentenced him. He then preferred an appeal to the District Judge, and then on some grounds the case was transferred through the intervention of the High Court to another district. There again the conviction and sentence was upheld. He then preferred an appeal to the High Court, and practically got scot-free on a technical ground, while incidentally the Chief Justice made in his judgment an observation about a man who was not in any way connected with the case.

Mr. A. F. STARK: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable member's motion seeks to discuss the Jiagunj Hat-looting case.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: You read the whole thing.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He cannot do that and he will not do that.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: He does not understand the motion.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: I submit, Sir, that Pollard goes scot-free while the Chief Justice makes observations about Mr. Fazlul Huq who was not a witness, who was not a complainant, who was not even indirectly connected with this case and who was not given a chance to

defend himself. I submit, Sir, that the observations that Sir Harold made were uncalled for and unjustifiable. Why uncalled for I have already explained. Now, let me say why unjustifiable. What was the offence of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq? He wrote some letters to the District Magistrate. What did he write? The sum and substance of his letters was that the trying Magistrate must not be influenced by the browbeating of the police; that the trying Magistrate must try to rise above the Pollard methods and must not fear Pollard methods.

Now, Sir, in this land we know too often how demi-officials go from higher quarters to trying Magistrates asking them to do this or do that. What did Mr. Huq do in this case? He did not ask the trying Magistrate to pass a judgment of a certain kind. He did not say "Even if you get evidence you must acquit the accused". He simply said "Do not be influenced by police methods. You must exercise your judgment freely and fearlessly". In making these observations, in giving these instructions the ex-Chief Minister of Bengal did the right thing, did a thing which every God-fearing, every honest and every independent Chief Minister should do for the province to uphold the cause of justice. I, therefore, say that the observations that were made about Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq by Sir Harold Derbyshire were unjustified.

Sir, with these words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I realise that I am not competent to discuss the conduct of an Hon'ble Judge of the High Court but according to your observation, Sir, from the Chair, I am certainly competent to discuss the merits of the judgment delivered by the High Court as also the observations made by the Hon'ble Chief Justice in that connection. Dr. Sanyal, my esteemed friend, has already given you the background how a poor pleader Mr. Satya Gopal Mazumdar was assaulted by a police officer of the Imperial cadre who is known throughout the district of Murshidabad for creating consternation in the minds of the people. He not only assaulted a responsible member of the Bar but went further still. Sir, in season and out of season he has been so rude, so insolent, so ill-behaved towards the members of the public, not excluding members of the Legislature, that people dare not enter the precincts of his house.

Sir, we know the background. This gentleman Mr. Mazumdar was assaulted. At once he lodged a complaint. What was the fault of the District Magistrate? The District Magistrate only transferred the case to a Magistrate who was reputed for his honesty, reputed for his sense of justice, reputed for his impartiality, a man who had the courage to rise above any temptation, to rise above any threat or intimidation from any quarters.

Sir, I happened to be the messenger of a letter, to which reference has been made by the High Court. As Secretary of the Progressive Coalition Party on whose suffrage the Ministry stood, I carried that letter not to

interfere with the free flow of justice but only to allow that stream of justice to flow on uninterrupted and to check the vagaries of the particular police officer and never allow those vagaries to go on unchecked, undeterred and unrestricted. What did the Chief Minister or the Home Minister of the province write? If you permit me, Sir, I will only refer to two relevant sentences from that letter. He said: "The police are at liberty to collect as much evidence as possible in support of the charges, but this must be done legitimately and dishonest attempts to pile up facts and circumstances against the accused must be severely condemned. In the case of this particular officer nothing seems to be strange. This should not be allowed. The Subdivisional Officer should assert himself and not yield to threats. After all the Superintendent of Police is not the Government nor is the Superintendent of Police the repository of all power. So long as the Subdivisional Officer does his duty honestly and uprightly, he has nothing to fear. As a matter of fact, if he finds that the evidence does not justify the commitment, that the facts and circumstances justify the discharge of the accused, he should not hesitate to do that because of the consequences his orders might have on the Superintendent of Police."

There was nothing wrong on the part of the Home Minister, on the part of the Chief Minister of the province, who had reports from reliable sources, not excluding members of the Legislature representing that district, that attempts were being made to pile up evidence, to create circumstances, to make out a case against some unfortunate commissioners of the municipality of Ziaganj. Sir, I am precluded from discussing that case at the present moment, but may I submit for your consideration as also for the consideration of the House that that particular police officer has been notorious for his misbehaviour and misconduct and under his protecting wings in my own Sadar subdivision, which I have the honour to represent in this Assembly, certain subordinate police officers were charged with having made grievous assaults on some of my constituents. False cases were also filed against some of my constituents but in most of the cases there have been acquittals.

Sir, that is the position. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with that police mentality and the District Magistrate—a weakling, an imbecile coward—had not the courage to rise above that. I had been to the District Magistrate himself. He said: "I am afraid so long as this police officer is here, the administration of the district cannot go on. For God's sake, remove this police officer." That is what the District Magistrate said. I say with the fullest sense of responsibility without any fear of contradiction from any quarters that the District Magistrate had almost succumbed, the District Magistrate yielded to the threat, to the intimidation, to the blandishment of this police officer. Therefore, it was necessary in the interest of justice, in the interest of free flow of justice that the higher authorities must rise above everything and try to introduce a healthier tone into the administration, must direct the District Magistrate to ask his subordinate officers to assert so that real justice might be done to poor people who were suffering at the hands of this police officer of the

district. When I had been to the District Magistrate, I told him point-blank "Let there be a Magistrate who has got the courage of his own conviction" and fortunately for us this Magistrate was no other than Mr. Salamatullah who had a brilliant record of public service behind him and who had the courage to fine an Imperial Officer who is imperious, haughty, arrogant and insolent and has disturbed the traditions of the Imperial service. Sir, I would not raise any racial question. If the Superintendent of Police of Murshidabad happened to be an Indian and if he had the temerity to kick an European gentleman, there would have been sensation, there would have been commotion in the British Empire, perhaps there would have been shooting, perhaps he would have been hanged, pilloried and tortured with every refinement of cruelty and barbarous savagery, he would have been slaughtered, he would have been murdered.

Sir, at the instance of this very Pollard, a court was preferred, for appeal not within the district. A rule was obtained from the High Court to have this case tried not by the District Judge of Murshidabad but, at the instance of Mr. Pollard himself, by the District Judge of Nadia who was beyond the influence, beyond the control of the District Magistrate or the influence of the higher authorities. There is no evidence on record that there has been any interference, that there has been any persuasion, or there has been any inducement from any quarters to interfere with justice so far as the District Judge of Nadia is concerned. What is the observation of the High Court, Sir? Simply because those letters have been addressed to the District Magistrate of Murshidabad in connection with a particular case, in connection with another case which has no bearing whatsoever on the case in question, there is a suspicion, a very strong suspicion that this case has been interefered with. And what is more, Sir,—I appeal to the House to bear with me for a few minutes,—immediately after Mr. Salamatullah had convicted Mr. Pollard, a member of the Imperial Service, he was sought to be bundled out of the district, but on the interevention at once of the then Chief Minister, transfer was not possible. It must be said to the credit of the then Chief Minister that he immediately got that transfer order cancelled and set right everything, and the District Magistrate congratulated Government and definitely told me that but for the cancellation of the transfer order, his position would have been awkward and precarious in the district. Sir, Dr. Sanyal has referred to the constitution of a Special Bench in the High Court. Why was this Special Bench constituted? A particular Bench which had issued the rule, that Bench was not allowed to try Mr. Pollard's case. After the Special Bench was constituted, it was found that a particular Judge of the High Court who had stated while issuing the rule that he could not try the case because he was a friend of Mr. Pollard, was also deliberately included in that Bench. This is the sample of justice that we receive (Cries of shame! shame! from the Opposition Benches). I do not want to cast any reflection on any Judge of the High Court, I do not want to impute any motive to any Judge of the High Court, but I will come to the

uncalled for aspersions that have been cast upon the ex-Chief Minister of Bengal. Aspersions were cast, but for what? For rising above everything, for not submitting to the threats of European bureaucrats, for trying not to interfere with justice, but helping a free flow of justice, for trying to tear up the veil of conspiracy that concealed the poor show behind it? For that the ex-Chief Minister must be condemned. Sir, he was not a party to the suit, neither a defendant nor a plaintiff, nothing whatsoever, and yet his name was dragged into the court, because he had the audacity, as Chief Minister, as Home Minister, to administer a warning and to give clear direction to his subordinate officers who were shaking, and trembling in their shoes, to rise above everything and not to yield to the threats and intimidation of the police officer. Sir, what is the observation of the High Court? Mr. Fazlul Huq has broken his oath of office. I do not know what was the oath of office. If you administer justice to an European gentleman, you break the oath of office. If you administer a warning in connection with a case in which an European gentleman is involved, you break the oath of office. If you administer justice, if you have the courage of conviction, if you have the honesty of purpose to defend the rights of the poor victims of official *zabardastism*, you break the oath of office. I do not know what oath was administered to Mr. Fazlul Huq. Was it this: that under those extraordinary circumstances, those exciting circumstances Mr. Fazlul Huq should have bartered away the rights of the nation, Mr. Fazlul Huq should have mortgaged the rights of Indians and submitted to the dictates of European officers? Is that the position of the Chief Minister, is that the position of the Home Minister of a province? Sir, one of the observations is that Mr. Fazlul Huq is not fit to hold any responsible office. Fortunately for Mr. Fazlul Huq and fortunately for us in this Assembly, Sir, we do not hold any office on the suffrage of the High Court Judges, nor on the suffrage of the Governor of a Province nor even on the suffrage of the Viceroy of India. We hold office on the suffrage of our own people. And who is this man? Mr. Fazlul Huq is the leader of a great community and holds a high position which has never been the honour of some of the High Court Judges ever to hold. Sir, as Mayor of Calcutta, as President of the All-India Muslim League, as Chief Minister, as Home Minister, as Leader of public opinion, in various spheres and various fields of activity, by his sacrifices, by the courage of his convictions, by his brilliant record of services, he has risen much above some of the Judges who are adorning the High Court Bench today. Mr. Fazlul Huq stands not on the suffrage of Britishers, not on the suffrage of a Provincial Governor, not on the suffrage of High Court Judges. His merit, his integrity, his services, his sacrifices, his positive contributions to the country are not at all affected by any pronouncement of any High Court Judge. This is an unfortunate tragedy of our life that some sojourners, some foreigners come from far off lands and pronounce judgment over us. They are perhaps inferior to many of us in calibre, perhaps inferior to us in vision, perhaps inferior to us in talent, in imagination, in education and culture, perhaps inferior to us in sense of responsibility and duty. They pass judgment on Indians.

Fortunately for us we need not despair. A nation of Gandhis and Tilaks, Muhammad Alis and Abul Kalam Azads, Fazlul Huqs and Abdur Rahims, Deshbandhus and Surendranaths, Ashutoshes and Ameer Alis need not despair. We sent our representatives to the Round Table Conference, representatives of the type of these great men who discussed administrative problems with the greatest of politicians, with the greatest of thinkers, with the greatest of statesmen, with the greatest of philosophers, with the greatest of geniuses with that command of language, with that knowledge, with that profundity of thought which struck the greatest nations of the civilized world with wonder. Therefore I say, Sir, that these remarks of the Chief Justice are uncalled for, undignified, unjustified, and unworthy of the great position that he holds. (Loud applause from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I am growing doubtful if the cut motions which are being moved today should be against the Minister in charge of the Judicial Department or the Minister for the Home Department who is in charge of the personnel, transfer and dismissal of officers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there cannot be two opinions on the question that Ministers have the right to write letters and to give a piece of their mind to the officers who have to carry out the policy enunciated by the Cabinet or the Ministry. This is done not only in Bengal but wherever there is an Executive, whether it be in England or in America or in Moscow. On that point, Sir, I think the Chief Minister of the day committed no mistake. The only mistake he committed was that he wrote those letters not in his official capacity but as a private gentleman, with, perhaps, the best of intentions, I admit. He would have done better if what he wanted to convey to this Collector or to the police officer had been conveyed through the Chief Secretary or through the Secretary of one of the many departments under him. Why people grew suspicious was that instead of using official machinery which gave him power, which gave his word greater prestige and greater force, he thought it wise to use the services of the Secretary of his political party. That, Sir, I think, even the ex-Chief Minister will admit, was an act which has led to all these troubles. Letters have been read and letters have been quoted but a significant sentence in one of the letters, which has been glided over rather significantly was that the honourable member who spoke last, the Secretary of the Progressive Party would convey something more than the contents of the letter verbally. That again was a mistake committed by the ex-Chief Minister. He should not have allowed anything to be conveyed verbally through an agency that was not official. It was bad administration and it was a serious mistake which did create suspicion in the minds of the people. It was within his power to call the Collector to Calcutta and tell him and give him a bit of his mind. I am merely criticising the method adopted by him although I admit that a Minister has the right to call upon officers to do this, that or the other, and of course without breaking the law. The speaker who preceded me, the honourable member for Jangipur, Sir, waxed eloquent on many points. I do not wish in any way to chill his enthusiasm

for his chief because his chief was my chief also for a time. But where I join issue with him is that instead of bringing this cut motion now at this late hour, if the Police officer or the Collector or the other officials in that great district of Murshidabad were so terribly bad and did not behave well, and acted against the orders and intentions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of the day who was also Hon'ble Home Minister, why did he not induce his Chief to bring forth a bit of courage and use his power as the head of the Government and send them out bag and baggage; and if his wishes remained unheeded he would himself have gone out. Sir, to show weakness when the occasion requires force, to show imbecility when it requires courage and confidence in one's own honesty, at that time not only the Chief Minister but the accessories before and the accessories after the fact never used the great power and qualifications on which Mr. Fazlul Huq had reached the pinnacle of the highest glory.

Sir, I do not understand why our Nawab Sahib should be taken to task in this way. The tradition of this House is that the Opposition as well as the supporters have combined and always allowed the Nawab Sahib whatever amounts he has asked for. For the first time today I feel that seriousness has been brought into the debate on his Demand. The Nawab Sahib's demands could have been agreed to (Interruption).

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: After the Nawab Sahib's reply you will find everything all right.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I do not want to take up any more time of the House. One minute more, Sir. May I appeal to the Hon'ble and learned Leader of the Opposition not to allow his case to be lost by motions moved by incompetent people who are carried away more by enthusiasm than by sticking to facts, than by taking a judicial view of facts as they were and facts as they are. What the Chief Justice of the High Court did, what the judgment was and so on, under your ruling, we cannot discuss. But, Sir, if it is written in the destiny of the Hon'ble and learned leader of the Opposition to lead the House again as head of another Government, I hope he will not repeat methods of administration which are liable to lead to suspicion, which are liable to create doubts about his honesty of purpose and which are liable to create difficulties in the way of his administration.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, to take the cue from the last speaker I hope the debate on the subject before us will have at least one effect of creating an impression upon the High Court Judges that their judgments are also open to suspicion, open to legitimate criticism and open to certain suspicions of a very grave nature and I think that hereafter the High Court Judges will feel while delivering their judgments that they are after all subordinate to the Department.

I approach this question raised by Dr. Sanyal's cut motion purely from a lawyer's point of view. Sir, you have been a lawyer, I myself am a lawyer and there are others here who are also lawyers. We are all trained in the

highest traditions of the Bench and the Bar. We know, Sir, that a lawyer is accustomed to respecting the judiciary to the highest extent. Lawyers may lose cases even unjustly. Sometimes decisions are very wrong but their confidence in the honesty and integrity of the courts and judges is seldom shaken. But here is a very sad example in which the confidence of the province as a whole is shaken so far as the independence and integrity of the judges are concerned. Sir, my friend Mr. Syed Badruddoja has very ably vindicated the position of Mr. Fazlul Huq, Mr. Fazlul Huq does not require his support, but there is one thing which is very clear in this matter. Mr. Stark, the Chief Whip of the European Party, was very much touched when the word "European" was introduced by Dr. Sanyal. He stepped up to say that racial consideration should not be dragged in, I very much appreciate that attitude.* * * *

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think I can allow the last sentence.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: That portion which you disallow me may be deleted. I have no objection. In speaking out my mind if I transgress the limit of parliamentary decorum it is for you to pull me up and I shall stand corrected. But you will find, Sir, that this judgment was more a decision on a matter which was not before the High Court than it was a judgment on the case before the Special Bench. The point for determination was not the conduct of Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq nor the conduct of Mr. Syed Badruddoja. The matter for consideration was whether Mr. Pollard was rightly convicted or not; but what did the High Court Judges do, Judges drawing the highest salary from the Public Exchequer: what did they bother about? They were bothering about absolutely extraneous matters, absolutely irrelevant matters and things which had absolutely no connection with the case. Mr. Pollard, Sir, was the victim: the question was whether his conviction stood or not. But the High Court Judges were obsessed with the idea that there was Mr. Fazlul Huq behind the complainant, Babu Satya Gopal Majumdar, the High Court Judges were obsessed with the idea that Mr. Fazlul Huq was behind the scene and was responsible for the conviction of Mr. Pollard. Sir, that was absolutely foreign to the issue and Mr. Pollard, as an accused, had submitted a written argument and in that argument he informed the court about many extraneous matters but not any ground. When he appealed before the District Judge of Nadia, the appeal was argued by one of the ablest lawyers of the province, Mr. B. C. Chatterjea, but there was also no ground in the appeal; and the appeal was dismissed on the ground, I understand, that the lower court had passed a lenient sentence. Then all of a sudden the case came up before the High Court, and fresh grounds which were not to be found in the appeal petition were incorporated—I do not know from where—perhaps they were mooted in the secret vaults of the department. And what is the impression that has been created, Sir? The impression that has been created by the High Court Judges in this case is that if a party is powerful, if a party belongs to a particular cadre of a service, I will not mention which service, it is possible for that party to influence the High

Court Judges,—to influence according to its own desire. Sir, this impression has been caused not for nothing. Look at the composition of the Bench itself: A rule was issued by Mr. Lodge and by Mr. Das sitting with him. At the time when the rule was issued, Mr. Lodge in the open court was reported to have expressed his unwillingness to deal with this case because he was once a friend of Mr. Pollard. The Chief Justice, Sir Harold Derbyshire, insisted upon including that particular gentleman in that particular Bench. What was the reason? There was no dearth of Judges in the High Court: there were so many Judges in the High Court who in a series of judgments have enhanced the prestige of the Judiciary and enhanced the prestige of the province, and their judgments were upheld by the Federal Court. When such Judges were available, what was the point still in insisting upon having this particular friend of Mr. Pollard on the Bench? I can understand a particular company dealing as a monopolist in rice: was this also a thing of that description? Was it that not merely a Judge was needed but a friend of Mr. Pollard was needed? This is the impression that has been created in the province. It is no use indulging in hypothetical questions: a friend of the culprit was there on the Bench: he did not intend to sit there as a Judge, but still he was forced to sit. The only sensible conclusion is that a friend was needed in this particular case and this friend was referred to in the judgment itself.

Then, Sir, look at the procedure that was adopted. Letters came in—I do now know how the Government allowed those letters to be placed before the Court: I do not know why the Government of Bengal did not claim about the secrecy of the letters because they were purely a private administrative correspondence between the Chief and Home Minister on the one hand and the District Magistrate on the other. In the ordinary course of things we, as lawyers, have experienced that even more important letters which were wanted by private parties were never allowed any use; but here was an entirely different case. The letters very easily came without any objection, without any plea being taken by the Counsel; and that was because Mr. Fazlul Huq was there; he was then out of office and persons who did not see eye to eye with Mr. Fazlul Huq must have thought of making it public. Therefore, these letters were placed before the Court, but how could they be taken as evidence? We, lawyers, accustomed to the ordinary rules of evidence, know that there are certain provisions of law which make evidence admissible. These letters by an unknown procedure were taken as evidence; these letters were not allowed to be tested by any cross-examination of the parties concerned. This, Sir, is an unusual procedure that was adopted and the learned Judges had so much to say about the contents of those letters but they had nothing to say with regard to the insolent remarks of the other party. Mr. Pollard in his note to the lower court said that he did not expect justice there, but he was sure that he would have justice in the High Court. I do now know how he was inspired by this prophetic vision, but the fact is that he made a forecast in his own case that he would lose in the lower courts, but would win in the High Court. He knew that because among the High Court Judges he had friends, and a friend in need is a friend indeed. Therefore he could make

that prophecy. So, Sir, purely from the lawyer's point of view I submit with all temerity not only to the House but also to the Government that they must take stock of the position and they must take stock of the impression that has been created in the outside world by the shameless judgment——

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, you should withdraw the word "shameless".

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: All right, Sir; I withdraw the word "shameless", but I say unworthy judgment of the High Court. Sir, as a lawyer I believe in justice and I believe that judges should be protected from undue criticism; but at the same time I think that when judges have profaned themselves and lent themselves to the suspicion of the world of the worst kind, when they demeaned themselves to the position of being hand-in-glove with the executive, I submit that it is the duty of the Government to convey this impression to the authorities that be and to see that at least the present chief incumbent of the highest judicial court of the province is called back.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: As a man of business I must first of all deal with motion No. 2 of Mr. Shahed Ali. He wants to raise a discussion about the transfer of the subordinate court of the third Sub-Judge from the district headquarters to Chandpur. He has explained his case and I have nothing to add. All that I want to say is that so far as the offices of the subordinate judges are concerned they must go together. Here Government have nothing to do with the selection of the place where these offices should go. With the common consent of the District Judge and the District Magistrate the place selected is Brahmanbaria and we have nothing to do with that. It has been decided that all the magisterial courts, the District Judge's court and the sub-judge's courts will be placed together so that the pleaders working there may have convenience; and it is for the convenience of the pleaders that we made it. Another difficulty is this. So far as the Subordinate Judges are concerned, they have got the additional power of the Sessions Judge as well. Now, if you want to have Sessions Judge in one place and Additional Sessions Judges in another place, it will be a difficult position. So, it was decided that all the three Subordinate Judges and the District Judge must work together in one place. As Brahmanbaria has been selected both by the District Judge and the District Magistrate for the purpose, Government has got nothing to do with it.

Then I take up the question raised by my friend Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta as to the method of recruitment of Judicial Officers, specially of the Munsifs. Here my friend has taken objection like this that while the Munsifs are now being appointed from those who have passed the B. L. Examination, they should first have training as a practitioner. I know at present when a Munsif is appointed, he is not given charge of any office at once. He is under training for some period and after that he gets court work. So arrangements have been made for their training. I do not find any necessity for going back to the old method of training these people in

courts where they may work practically without any brief and so allow them to stay there for three years for nothing. I hope my friend will agree with us in thinking that he is not right in asking us now to change the system of recruitment.

Now, I must refer to the most controversial affair regarding Mr. Pollard's case. I do not know why a mountain has been made of a mole hill. What is the purport of the judgment? The judgment simply says this, that an officer, if he has committed an offence, must be prosecuted after sanction is obtained from the Government of Bengal. If that sanction has not been obtained, an illegal proceeding is taking place in the court. The highest court of the province says that sanction must be first obtained and then the work will commence. Why so much trouble? (Laughter.) You cannot object to that. If the sanction can be obtained and the case is proceeded with, you can have absolutely no cause for alarm. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Who will pay the costs of the respective parties? Will you?) That is the real thing that has come out of this. Nothing more. If the Chief Justice actually acquitted the accused——(Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He has.) He has not. He has said that he will be subject to re-trial when the sanction of Government has been obtained and the ruling that he has given is that until sanction is obtained, no court can take cognisance of the case.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of information, Sir. Will Government give sanction if it is applied for?

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: I cannot say that. I know it is the duty of the Home Department. When the Police budget was under discussion, why did you fly away? (Laughter.) You must have some sense of proportion. You lost your case thereby. You are now bringing your case in a wrong place (Renewed laughter). I had no intention of discussing the question of the remarks of the Chief Justice in this place and I tried my best to avoid the issue (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Why don't you discuss it. You can do it.) because I know if I discussed it on its merit, my way of putting it will be objectionable to you all. That is why I wanted to avoid it and I asked all who are interested in it to allow me to avoid it. But now it has been thrust upon me and quite wrongly. These confidential papers which you say were confidential have been disclosed by you. What alternative have I but to place those letters before this House, read them out to you and allow you to come to your own conclusion?

Mr. SPEAKER: We are enjoying your speech—there is no doubt about it. But there are so many other demands.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: We know those letters.

Mr. SPEAKER: You read part of them.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: I am putting in the relevant portions.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: If the letters are to be read, the whole of them must be read.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nawab Sahib, you know that what is generally done is that if you want to put in contents of a document, it is desirable that the whole of it should be presented. That is why I am asking you to be as brief as possible, otherwise it will take some time.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur. I will read the relevant portions.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: No, read the whole of it or none of it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. We had decided with your concurrence and the concurrence of other parties to take up four demands today—one was to come to an end at 4 o'clock, the other at 4-30 and the third one at 5, 5-15 and 5-30. If you kindly ask the Hon'ble Minister in charge to shorten his speech, we can proceed with the next demand, otherwise it will be impossible to finish the items.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it has been the tendency of the Opposition, as you must have noticed, not to allow Ministers to have their say. The Hon'ble Finance Minister was not allowed to read his statement. They demand 5 minutes and then take 10 minutes. Even if we have to sit up to the time of breaking fast, the Nawab Sahib should be allowed to have his say. Ministers shall not be kept back.

Mr. SPEAKER: I quite see that this demand was timed from 3 to 4 p.m.—for one hour. We have already exceeded it by half an hour and most of the time has been taken up by the Opposition—there is no doubt about it. So it would be unfair to deny any time to the Hon'ble Nawab Sahib. Moreover, there is no doubt that you are also enjoying. I would request Nawab Sahib to be as brief as possible.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Here are those precious documents——(Interruptions).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He must read the whole thing.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Just have patience for ten minutes——(Uproar).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi in his usual way not knowing the position had made certain reflections. Sir, the position is that we had claimed during Budget demands a much longer period for discussion. As a compromise it was agreed that Government will take at most 15 minutes out of the time allotted and if they put up any other speaker, the Minister will have to be shut out. We cannot help it.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: There was no such agreement——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes; the time was fixed up.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is no use quarrelling. The fact is that there was an agreement, but there was certainly no agreement that nobody on Government side should speak. Nawab Sahib, I would request you to be as brief as possible.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Here is the 4th letter of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister or rather the ex-Chief Minister. It runs thus: "My dear Mr. Chatterjee, I am again sending Mr. Syed Badruddoja to you——(Interruptions and loud uproar).

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Just let him finish——(continued interruptions).

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: On a point of order, Sir. The letter appeared in the press.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know. I cannot say if it is a fact, but as far as I remember, this letter was perhaps exhibited in the case itself, and it would be better if you, Nawab Sahib, give a gist of it here.

(At this stage the Hon'ble Minister left his seat and went to consult the Judicial Secretary.)

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, this is Mr. Amery's self-governing Institution——(Laughter).

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Here is what the Hon'ble ex-Chief Minister wrote. As a matter of fact he thinks that the evidence——(Loud uproar and continuous interruptions).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: This is sheer waste of time. Sir, the question be now put.

(Both Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal and Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi rose on points of order.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, Mr. Sanyal.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I have also risen on a point of order, I demand my right.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two of the honourable members, one to my right and one to my left, both rose on a point of order, and Mr. Sanyal caught my eye first. Therefore I think he ought to rise on his point of order first.

Alhadj GYASUDDIN AHMED CHOUDHURY: That fellow from Sind is always disturbing!

(A voice from the Ministerial Benches: What about the Faridpur man?)

Alhadj GYASUDDIN AHMED CHOUDHURY: Faridpur is in Bengal.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, my point of order is simple. We have no objection to the letters being read out as such, but here in this particular instance when the Speaker who is the highest in this House has repeatedly given instructions to the Hon'ble Minister not to read out the

letters *in extenso* but to give only a gist of them, after that the Hon'ble Minister insisted upon reading those letters from the beinning. This is highly objectionable. I will not allow the dignity of the Chair to be flouted in this way.

(Cries of "oh, oh" from the Ministerial Benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Nawab Sahib, I do not think time will permit you to read out so many letters. Don't read them please; just give a gist.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. Have I caught your eye?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. Do the rules of debate disallow me from repeating once again a quotation that has been made?

Mr. SPEAKER: I will certainly not allow unnecessary repetition.

(Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi went on speaking and amidst uproar there were cries of "sit down, sit down" from the Opposition Benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Let me hear what he says.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, you have been good enough to say that you will not permit unnecessary repetition. But if an argument is used and I want to answer that and in doing so repetition is necessary, do you permit or do you not permit it?

Mr. SPEAKER: I know that it may be necessary. At times to say that so and so has said something and in reply I want to say this, but here it is not that. Nawab Sahib, do not read out the letters; just give a gist. That is my ruling.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: What do you mean? If I want to read these letters, you won't allow me?

Mr. SPEAKER: No; I won't allow it.

(Interruption.)

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, before we proceed further will you kindly ask the Hon'ble Minister who lost his temper to make amends and stop his buffoonery?

(Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hossain, Minister in charge of Administration of Justice, certainly made some gestures from which some inferences unfavourable to him may be made but we all know his manners. Therefore I do not take exception to that.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, we the members of this House insist on his making amends for his unmannerly behaviour and for his insolent conduct. We do not want to excuse him this time.

(Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not that I took his conduct as an insolent bevaviour towards the Chair. If I had taken it that way I would have insisted upon an apology from him. But I have not taken it in that way and I think the whole House has not taken it in that way.

(Interruption.)

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: These people are not in a mood to hear me, Sir. From the last portion of the letter you will find that Mr. Syed Baddruddoja had been sent there as an emissary to get at facts and to get something done and therefore I say that the most objectionable part of the letter is where the ex-Chief Minister had stated "So far as that Police Officer is concerned I will take him to task and I will see that he is put into difficulties".

(Interruption.)

I oppose all the cut motions.

The motion of Mr. Atul Chandra Sen that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Shahed Ali that the demand of Rs. 75,12,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruf Hossain, Khan Bahadur, that a sum of Rs. 75,12,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" was then put and agreed to.

XVII, etc.—Irrigation.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 48,13,000 be granted for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation—Working Expenses—18-Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues—18(1)-Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Famine Insurance Fund—19-Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works—B-Financed from Ordinary Revenues and 68-Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works".

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 48,13,000 for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation—Working Expenses—18-Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues —18(1)-Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Famine Insurance Fund —19-Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works—B-Financed from Ordinary Revenues and 68-Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works" be reduced by Rs. 100. Sir, this is to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to maintain Damodar Embankment which has recently created a great flood havoc and loss to the people of Burdwan.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, গত দামোদরের বাঁধ ভাঙ্গার ফলে বর্ত্তমানে বর্দ্ধমানে কয়েকটি মহকুমায় যে প্লাবন হয়েছে তাতে কত লোকের ঘরবাড়ী ভেঙ্গে গেছে, তাতে কত লোক কষ্ট পাচ্ছে। কত লোককে গাছ ও ঘরের চালে আশ্রয় নিতে হয়েছে। মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় স্বয়ং সেই ভয়াবহ ও হৃদয়বিদারক অবস্থা পরিদর্শন করেছেন। অদ্যাবধি বহু লোক খেতে পাচ্ছে না, এবং প্লাবনে ও অনাহারে কত লোক যে মারা গিয়েছে তা জানা যায় নাই। প্লাবিত অঞ্চলের যে কি পরিমাণ ক্ষতি হয়েছে, এবং কত দিনে যে সেই ক্ষতিপূরণ হতে পারে তারও কোন হিসাব নাই। দামোদরকে tame বা turn করবার জন্য বাঁধ দেওয়া হয়েছে, কিন্তু বর্ত্তমান প্লাবনের কারণ কি? এত অতর্কিত ভাবে কেন বান হয়? বর্ত্তমান প্লাবনের কারণ যে বাঁধের ভাঙ্গন তা তদন্ত করবার জন্য মন্ত্রী মহাশয় যে জেলা Magistrateকে নিয়ে committee নিযুক্ত করেছেন, সে তদন্তের reportগুলি পেয়েছেন কি না জানি না, কিন্তু কিভাবে বাঁধ ভেঙ্গেছে তা আমরা কতকটা জানি। কাজেই বাঁধ দিয়া প্লাবন রক্ষা ব্যর্থতায় পরিণত হয়েছে। গত ১৫ই জুলাই তারিখে যখন দামোদরে বান হয় তখন Irrigation Departmentএ খবর যায় যে দামোদরে ভীষণ প্লাবনের সম্ভাবনা হয়েছে; কাজেই বাঁধ সম্বন্ধে খুব বেশী সতর্কতার দরকার ছিল। সেই সময় বোধ হয় P.W.D.'র লোক থামেরপুরের নিকট যেখানে বাঁধ দিয়া সামান্য সামান্য জল বেরুতেছিল সেখানে বাঁধকে রক্ষা করবার জন্য গিয়েছিলেন এবং সামান্য দুই একটি পাথর দিয়ে ভাল করে বাঁধকে রক্ষা করার ব্যবস্থা না করে চলে আসেন; আর বিশেষ নজর দেওয়া কর্ত্তব্য বলে মনে করেন নাই। রাত্রের মধ্যে ঐ বাঁধ ভেঙ্গে যাওয়ায়, সেই বাঁধের উপর দিকের এলাকার সমস্ত লোকের গরু, বাছুর, ঘরবাড়ী সমস্ত কিছু জলে ভাসিয়ে নিয়ে যায়। এই যে Irrigation Departmentএর ঔদাসীন্য এবং অবহেলা তার জন্য লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক গৃহহীন ও সর্ব্বহারা হয়েছে এবং প্লাবনে ভেসে গিয়েছে। সেই জন্য সম্পূর্ণ দায়ী আমাদের সেচ বিভাগের কর্ম্মচারীগণ। এইভাবে দামোদরকে রক্ষা করবার জন্য যেভাবে বাঁধ দেওয়া হয়েছে, যেমন Rail Road, G. T. Road এবং Canalএ যে বাঁধ আছে, সেই বাঁধ দ্বারা দামোদরকে tame বা turn করা যাচ্ছে না। তা সত্ত্বেও মন্ত্রী মহাশয় order দিয়েছেন যে Ring embankment করা হবে। আমার মনে হয় Ring embankment করে দামোদরের প্লাবন বন্ধ করা যাবে না। এ অতি দুর্দ্দান্ত নদী। দামোদর গঙ্গার মত শান্ত নদী নয়। এ নদীকে Ring embankmentএর দ্বারা শান্ত করা যাবে না; বিশেষতঃ যখন পূর্ব্ব বাঁধের উত্তর দিকের বাঁধ নদী গর্ভ হইতে ২০ ফিট নীচু। বালির দ্বারা দক্ষিণ দিকে উঁচু হয়ে যায়, সুতরাং Ring embankment দ্বারা বর্দ্ধমান জেলার লোকদিগের জমি ও গৃহাদি রক্ষা করা সর্ব্ব সময় সফল হবে না। কাজেই আমি মনে করি Sir William Willcocks ১৫ বৎসর আগে বাংলায় ও বিশেষতঃ বর্দ্ধমানে

দামোদর নদীর স্বাভাবিক সেচপ্রথা ও গতি সম্বন্ধে যে পরিকল্পনা করেন এবং আমাদের স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগের পূর্ববর্ত্তী Directorগণ দামোদর ও বর্দ্ধমান ও হুগলী জেলা সম্বন্ধে যে মন্তব্য ও প্রণালী বলেছেন বর্ত্তমান সময়েতে তাঁদের সেই প্রণালী কার্য্যকরীভাবে চালাবার জন্য বর্ত্তমান Governmentএর বিশেষ ব্যবস্থা করা দরকার। নতুবা পুাবন ও ম্যালেরিয়ায় পশ্চিম বঙ্গ কিছুদিনের মধ্যেই জনশূন্য হয়ে পড়বে। Dr. Bentley সাহেব আমাদের স্বাস্থ্য বিভাগের Director ছিলেন। তিনি প্রতিকারের জন্য যে সকল নির্দ্দেশ দিয়েছেন সেই সকল নির্দ্দেশ অনুসারে কাজ করা দরকার। তাহা হইলে কৃষি, সেচ ও স্বাস্থ্য বিষয়ে পশ্চিম বঙ্গের উন্নতি হয়। Government communiqueএ আমরা জেনেছি দামোদর নদের বান প্রতিকার করার জন্য বর্দ্ধমানের মহারাজাধিরাজ, Executive Engineer প্রভৃতিকে নিয়ে একটি committee হয়েছে। সেই committee কি report দিয়েছেন তা জানি না। তবে বর্দ্ধমান জেলার দামোদর নদ-তীরবর্ত্তী ভূভাগকে রক্ষা করতে হলে, ও সমৃদ্ধিশালী ও স্বাস্থ্যকর করতে হলে Government যে committee গঠন করেছেন সেই কমিটির উপর নির্ভর না করে Sir William Willcocks সাহেবের report অনুযায়ী কাজ করলে দেশ রক্ষা হয়। যদি পুনরায় দামোদরের বানকে বাঁধের দ্বারা রক্ষা করতে চান, তাহলে আমার মনে হয় হানার নিকট ও উপর দিকে যে সমস্ত নদী মজে গিয়েছে, যেমন কাণা, বাঁকা, বেহুলা, গাঙ্ক্ষুর প্রভৃতি সমস্ত নদীগুলিকেও উদ্ধার করে, বাঁধের মুখে regulator বসিয়ে যাতে সাধারণভাবে সেচের ব্যবস্থা হয় তাই করবেন, উহাতে জেলা পূর্ব্বের মত স্বাস্থ্যে ও সমৃদ্ধিতে পূর্ণ হইবে। কিন্তু সেজন্য জেলার অধিবাসীদের এবং চাষীদের কোন প্রকার জলকর না দিতে হয় তারও ব্যবস্থা করবেন।

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 48,13,000 for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation—Working Expenses," etc., be reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I move this motion to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) the failure of Government to prevent the havoc created through the recent flood of the Damodar river devastating a large area in the Burdwan and Hooghly districts, although suitable measures had been suggested with this in view by Mr. Glass as early as 1920, and by Mr. Adams Williams and by Sir William Willcocks more than 15 years ago;

(*ii*) the failure to plan and give immediate effect to measures for a long-term remedy of the situation created through the Damodar flood;

(*iii*) the failure to check the adoption of patchwork remedies like the construction of additional embankments to fill up the gap caused through the breaches in the present embankment, regardless of the ultimate consequences of such a patchwork, on the economic and public health conditions of the population living in the Damodar basin and in Calcutta; and

(*iv*) the failure of Government generally to promote more extensive schemes for irrigation in different parts of the province, particularly to further the "grow more food campaign".

Mr. Speaker, Sir,——

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I am not going to yield to his point of order. He always raises silly points of order. I would appeal to him to refer to the particular Rules of Business before he raises a point of order. He does not know the rules and he raises points of order which ultimately prove to be no points of order. I would appeal to you, Sir, not to allow him to raise such points of order.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I seek your protection, Sir, for the words used against me for I am within my rights here to raise a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Unfortunately for me, I mean, for the Chair, the rules are imperative, namely, that when a member rises on a point of order I have got to listen and give a decision and all other business for the time being must be suspended.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I appeal to you, Sir, to ask him to quote the rules under which he is bringing this point of order.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I seek your protection, Sir, and I wish you to give your ruling, either in your Chamber or here, for the language used by him against me because if this is allowed I may also use similar language.

Now, the point of order I wanted to raise was whether cut motions, on the top of which is written "are not admitted yet", and, secondly, cut motions giving arguments and reasons, are allowed under your permission.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What is the rule under which this point of order has been raised, Sir? If the Rules of Business are not infringed, no member has the right to rise on a point of order and thereby waste the time of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Siddiqi, these motions, I can tell you, are engaging my attention—whether there ought to be elaborate things like that.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: That was the thing I wanted to bring to your notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: As I was suggesting, Sir, time will not permit me today to give a comprehensive account of what I would like to be done by the Government of Bengal which has signally failed so far to stop the havoc of the Damodar for almost half a century and more, and what really ought to have been attempted by this and the previous Governments. I would invite the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge to a very constructive and capable publication of four articles contributed by eminent students of Science in a journal called "Science and Culture" in the month of September, 1943, which give a very good account of the causes which have led to the havoc, the manner in which these have been sought to be stemmed in the past and the remedies that should be undertaken in the immediate and near future. On a broad study of this position, Sir, it is

found that this river, this typical hill stream can only be made to serve the interests of the people if Government are seriously bent upon converting it into a perennial river. As a consequence of periodical floods, attempts have been made to dam the river haphazardly, both in its upper catchments as well as in its lower reaches. I do not complain against the present Ministry for this failure because the failure has really been a prolonged one. Remedies had been suggested in the past by eminent experts as early as 20 or 25 years ago and even more, but these remedies have, somehow or other, not been given effect to. Crores and crores of rupees have been spent on the Damodar Canal project which was after all a partial solution to the big problem which has to be tackled with more comprehensive vision. The remedy that was suggested by Mr. Glass, one of the able Executive Engineers of the Central Provinces in 1920, included the creation of reservoir pools in the upper catchments of the river Barakar as well as of the Damodar which would effect a control over a large sudden onrush of water from the sources of the Damodar and Barakar. Sir, I would invite the attention of Government to that report and also the subsequent analysis of the case by Mr. Adams Williams which showed that only with an expenditure of two crores the whole problem could be solved. That was the estimate then; it might have gone up now. It was first one crore fifty-two lakhs and went up to one crore 86 lakhs; it may be two crores or a little more now. Instead of attempting to tackle this problem piecemeal as a patchwork I appeal to the Minister in charge to look at the whole problem from a broad and comprehensive point of view.

I am glad and that pleasure of mine has already been signified through my not having moved a portion of the motion given notice of; I am glad that the Hon'ble Minister has started on the right lines by appointing a representative and expert Committee presided over by the Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan—one who is intimately connected and concerned with the havocs of the Damodar. I am sure that if the Committee is permitted to function properly and independently it would give us a report at an early date which, if acted upon by Government, would give us the much needed remedy. I do hope it will be permitted to work and no attempt will be made to sabotage it by putting laymen on the job and taking away some, as is customary with the present Government. (A voice: Present Government?) Yes, the present Government; you are always changing members of committees in party interests. Leaving that aside I would invite the attention of the Minister in charge to the fact that the Damodar river is not merely a problem of a portion of Burdwan and Hooghly districts; it is a problem of Calcutta and greater Calcutta as well. There is just a possibility of the Damodar suddenly breaking through and meeting the eastern channel through the Hooghly somewhere above Calcutta. If that contingency ever comes about—and it is not an unlikely contingency—even this year it could have happened—then the safety of the city of Calcutta, the port of Calcutta and the entire suburban areas of Calcutta would be seriously in danger. In this light of things the matter should be examined with much greater sense of responsibility than has been possible in the past

and I implored the Hon'ble Minister in charge to see that mere financial considerations or considerations of vested interests might not be permitted to stand in the way of having a permanent solution of the problem. As we laymen see things, if the Damodar is properly trained, if it is converted into a perennial river, there would be immense benefits not only to that area but also to the entire province of Bengal, because, Sir, it will help in quicker transportation at a cheap cost of coal and mineral products from that area through the Damodar which may be converted into a perennial river by artificial means with the aid of science. It would help in creating a flourishing place down below the ridges where now malaria takes a heavy toll in parts of Hooghly and Burdwan districts. It would make Calcutta safer; it would also enable hydro-electric schemes to be taken up to provide cheap electric power to a very large part of Western Bengal. All these possibilities are there. It is my humble opinion based on a careful study of things that the money that would be needed for afforestation and to create permanent reservoirs on the upper catchments of the Damodar and the Barakar would never be wasted.

I would conclude, Sir, with an appeal to the Hon'ble Minister in one other respect that there must be a complete reversal of the present policy—the policy of attempting to stop breaches by putting up embankments and raising the embankments higher and higher up or by strengthening the embankment by another second embankment, and so on and so forth. That will not bring about the relief sought for. There is at present an attempt which I have heard and which the Hon'ble Minister the other day, when I asked the question, strongly protested against—and I want a categorical denial from him today—to raise the embankment, to stop the breach and to have a protective embankment of 20 miles long with some water-logged area in between left. Sir, I have had a rough examination made of the price of land acquisition alone which will be involved in this and it came to about 48 lakhs of rupees for a length of 20 miles and for the width of the open space that is desired to be kept there, and 48 lakhs of rupees would be simply wasted and such a large area would be completely kept out of cultivation entirely if the present scheme that is being sponsored by some less competent executive officers of Government is proceeded with. I strongly urge that these schemes must not be proceeded with. When Government have appointed a committee, let the committee sit as quickly as possible, send us a report as early as practicable and we can surely wait for one month or two months to come across a really practicable scientific solution of the problem, and it is only after such report is available that Government should embark upon any proposal that they want to.

Incidentally I want to invite Government's attention to other smaller schemes, particularly the "More Scheme" in Birbhum for which my friend Dr. Sharat Chandra Mukherji has given notice of a cut motion but which he could not possibly move because of shortness of time. This "More Scheme" is also similarly situated. The scheme has been completed, Government officers have everything prepared and plans also made out. It relates to another catchment area of the Ajay and of other rivers in the

Birbhum district, and these also have problems similar to Damodar although in a much smaller scale. I would appeal to the Government to see that all these beneficent schemes be pursued properly in spite of conditions created through the war.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Sir, I shall be very brief. The Damodar river and the difficulties connected with the Damodar river are problems of irrigation of first-rate importance in Western Bengal. Sir William Willcocks described the methods pursued in controlling the onrush of this wild river as the shackles of Satan. The shackles of Satan this year again have burst with the result that not only 300 to 400 square miles of area are under water but the whole of transport facilities between Calcutta and Burdwan have broken down with incalculable results upon the province, specially in these days of food shortage and shortage of other commodities. I should like to ask the Hon'ble Minister as to what steps have been taken for the purpose of carrying on the regular and normal traffic subject to war conditions between Howrah and Burdwan. The breaches took place in July last and today we are by the end of September.

The next question which I should like to ask of the Hon'ble Minister is this. We have been told in a Government Press Communiqué issued after the floods that the river Damodar has changed its course and it is about to join with the Ganges at a place between the Bandel railway junction and Nabadwip. I am giving wide areas because most of the members of this House are not familiar with the topography of the place I am describing. I should like to have the views of the Hon'ble Minister on this very important point because if the course of the river changes then many more important problems of irrigation are bound to arise. At one time it was supposed that the Damodar embankment towards the Howrah side will flood the other part of the river but will make the railway system quite safe, that is to say, we could by the fastest train travel between Burdwan and Howrah within an hour and 15 minutes. That possibility may disappear altogether and I should like to have the views of the Hon'ble Minister on this particular point.

Last of all, I see the Hon'ble Minister has appointed a committee and I had the privilege of discussing the matter with my friend Dr. Meghnath Saha and the article which he has written in "Science and Culture". I am sure the attention of the Hon'ble Minister must have been drawn to this article, but the solution there suggested is a solution which is not dependent upon this Provincial Government but is dependent upon a co-operation between two other Provincial Governments with the assistance of the Centre. I should like to know from the Hon'ble Minister as to what steps he has taken for the purpose of convening a meeting of the committee and for the purpose of co-ordinating the efforts of the Provincial Governments with the Centre so as to be able to solve this urgent problem.

Sir HENRY BIRKMYRE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the breach on the left bank of the Damodar river on the 17th July was a disaster of the first magnitude. Government must be aware of the tragic effects this breach

has had on the food supply position. They must also know of the serious effects it has had on the war effort. It was not however until the 6th August, three weeks after the occurrence, that Government appointed a committee consisting of the Chief Engineer, Communications and Works, Irrigation Department and the District Magistrate of Burdwan to enquire into the causes of the breach.

The personnel of this committee scarcely shows appreciation of the gravity of the situation. A major catastrophe has occurred and Government propose to meet it with the usual departmental enquiry. We do not feel that such a departmental enquiry can possibly probe deeply enough into the causes of the breach. The very occurrence of the disaster itself suggests that the department has been guilty of failure to act on expert advice after previous floods, and lack of foresight, if not of negligence (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: But it is not a departmental enquiry). And it seems clear to us that the department cannot be judges in the matter. We feel that a much more searching enquiry by independent experts should be held into the causes of the breach. In any case, we consider that the report of the departmental enquiry should have been submitted by this time, and we want to know when the report will be submitted and when Government will publish the findings of the committee. This is a matter which concerns the Government of Bihar as well as the Bengal Government, and we are pleased to learn that a committee, on which the Bihar Government will be represented, is being set up to advise on the steps to be taken to prevent further breaches.

It has been admitted by Government that denudation of the catchment areas of the Damodar river in the Chota Nagpur Hills has been one of the main causes of the floods. We understand that schemes of afforestation have been recommended by forest officers over a long period of years, but nothing has been done because the Government of Bihar and the Government of Bengal could arrive at no financial settlement. We would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister that this question of afforestation is being taken up immediately with the Government of Bihar and that it will be pursued until a settlement is reached.

These floods are caused by a sudden downrush of water from the Chota Nagpur Hills, and this can only be prevented by afforestation which will retain the water and release it gradually. We would like to be assured, Sir, that this committee will proceed with this work immediately and that it will be instructed to submit its report at the earliest possible date.

Finally we should like to have from the Hon'ble Minister an account of the steps which have been taken to repair the breach and to strengthen the embankment.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had no intention in taking part in today's debate but for certain statements made by the Hon'ble Mr. B. P. Pain in the Legislative Council yesterday, who rumbled and talked beside the point. I knew that he is a lawyer. I will simply read out the speech he delivered in the Council, which has been published

in the *Hindusthan Standard* of today (24th September). It runs as follows——

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not necessary to read from a newspaper like this. You can reproduce it.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: This is a report from that speech which he is reported to have made on the floor of the House. He discussed about the policy, he attacked the past Government and in that connection he mentioned my name. With regard to the point raised by Mr. Srish Chandra Chakrabarty about the want of irrigation schemes in this province, the Minister said that "the policy of the present Government is one of complete disagreement with that of our predecessor Mr. Shamsuddin, the Minister who was in charge of the Department of Irrigation before us. He told the Assembly in his last budget speech that schemes of irrigation had to be curtailed and that more curtailment will be made in future because the war is on. That is not the view of the present Government. Our view is that for the very reason that the war is on much more food has got to be produced. To get more food we must bring more land under cultivation. Therefore it is the considered policy of this Government that more and more money should be made available for irrigation and irrigational schemes should be put through as early as possible."

Sir, I do not know whether Mr. Pain went through the whole of the speech that I delivered last time, I mean my budget speech. It is true, Sir, that I said that most of the department's engineers were taken over by the Government of India under orders of the Government of India to prosecute the special works for war. That is the reason why I said that the staff is denuded. I could have understood Mr. Pain's statement if he had spoken after dusk. It might have meant something. But I find that the Council was held in the morning. I thought that he should have been in his proper senses. In the last paragraph of my speech I said that whatever I have said before all that can be done in the present deplorable state of affairs and this is bound to continue at least so long as the war lasts. I said that neither the works in progress nor such new ones as are imperatively urgent or have special bearing on urgent food production are put off. It is very funny. Mr. Pain said "complete disagreement". Where is the complete disagreement? He wants food production. I also said the same thing. I do not understand why he waxed eloquent. He said that the past Government bungled the food problem. While we were in the Ministry, the price of rice rose up to Rs. 15 or Rs. 16 and now it is Rs. 45 and even Rs. 60. It is the present Government which has bungled. Mr. Pain said that he was in complete disagreement with the policy of the past Government. My friend should read the budget speech again and get some information there.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am obliged to Dr. Sanyal for the very conciliatory speech he made and for the small dose of appreciation which I got from him. The criticisms which have been made in regard to the policy of irrigation have all been criticisms

of the previous Government's policy of inaction. And I confess, Sir, that I myself have been an unrelenting critic of that policy since the day I was called upon to deal with the irrigation problems of this province.

Sir, there is more than one motion relating to the flood and breach of the Damodar. Floods, as we all know, are natural calamities for which no Government can be held responsible. Floods will go on occurring in this as in every other country wherever there are hill streams. And in the present state of things, for which this Government is not responsible, breaches in the Damodar embankment, I am afraid, are not preventible calamities.

The Glass scheme to which Dr. Sanyal has referred has been before the country for more than 20 years. This Government has lost no time in appointing a Committee consisting of the best available experts to advise about the means and methods of arresting silt and flood water in the catchment areas in Chota Nagpur and the Committee has been asked to advise specifically on the suitability of the Flood Control Reservoirs in the upper catchment areas and on afforestation in Bihar.

No sane Government could plunge into measures involving expenditure of crores of rupees without being assured, on the best authority, that the schemes are suitable and I have not the slightest intention of putting myself hastily into any glass scheme to enable any one in this House to throw stones at it at his leisure.

The work of closing the breach in the Damodar was work of immediate necessity. No doubt some opinions have been expressed to the effect that the river was changing its course. The latest report which I have received this morning indicates that work of closing the breach is nearing completion, and, for accidents, we can expect it to be closed in the course of the next 7 or 8 days. Government can very well congratulate itself that working between floods and freshets, its officers have been able almost to close the breach against almost overwhelming odds. The river began to rise and the river rose more than once since July, and even as late as 12th September, it rose, making deep water work very difficult. Remedial measures will be examined by the expert committee which, Dr. Sanyal has himself admitted, is a committee well constituted and most competent to advise in the matter.

One thing intrigues me about these cut motions and that is no member of the Krishak Proja Party has got up to move any cut motion in connection with Irrigation. Either the Krishak Proja members have ceased to take any interest in matters vital to the Krishaks and have taken up Mahasabha work instead, or they want to put in cold storage the history of 16 months' administration of their leader Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad of this Department

I shall now acquaint the House very briefly with the policy of the present Government about which information has been sought and I repeat once again that the policy of the present Government in regard to irrigation is one of complete disagreement with the defeatist policy of the previous Government. Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad has sought to draw my attention to the fact that I did not read his last speech and I was wrong in attributing

to him in my speech in another House that he had curtailed the irrigation programme very considerably. If he reads again the speech he delivered in March last, he will find himself saying "the programme of new expenditure in regard to Irrigation has to be drastically curtailed to satisfy the requirements of Military and Civil Defence". This Government does not share that view; nor does it share the view, he then also expressed that "because some of the superior engineering staff had been deputed on special duty with the Government of India, the normal activities of the department have to be curtailed and that it will be necessary to curtail them still further as the war progresses." That was the language used by Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmad. He said that he could not find it. He is obviously paying the penalty of reading a speech which somebody else wrote for him.

Our policy, Sir, is just otherwise. We feel that as the war progresses, more food is required and has got to be produced and more lands should be brought under cultivation and more Irrigation schemes should be launched and immediately executed, not merely to produce more food for the ordinary normal consumption of the province but for those engaged in war activities and war production.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Where is the money provided?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Money is coming. Please hear me. It is indeed a tragic fact that more than forty hundred thousand acres of land lie uncultivated from year's end to year's end for want of irrigation facilities.

Proper and thoughtful irrigation and drainage of these lands would produce bumper crops year after year and we would not have to cast wistful eyes to the Punjab or to Sind for a daily mouthful of food.

I repeat that the war does not make the slightest difference about execution of these schemes. It is mostly earthwork which has to be done, and involves no elaborate masonry, concrete or steel work.

During the short space of 4½ months which we have had at our disposal, we have re-examined a large number of important irrigation schemes, and have arranged for their execution as soon as the rains hold off. We have been able to enlist the sympathy of the Government of India from whom we have received substantial grants and more may be on the way.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: That was done by me.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: There is not an atom of truth in that claim. That claim is contradictory to his reported speech. Sir William Stampe, Irrigation Adviser to the Government of India, made, at my request, three trips to Calcutta to make personal contact with us and to examine our schemes on the spot: and I gratefully acknowledge the help which we have received from him.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: No legacy this time!

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Sir William has been most helpful and sympathetic in these difficult times. The Government of India, I am glad to be able to say, has responded to our request to release almost all the officers it took from us and they are being distributed in different areas for the execution of the approved schemes.

We have also decided on an experimental scheme of pump irrigation which, if it succeeds, will revolutionise agriculture in the province.

We have done all these in the short swift space of four months, and not even the severest critic of this Government will say that we have been idle or indifferent. We are eager to do more, eager to do all we can. We are eager to learn from you, if you have anything to offer us.

May we not, therefore, expect your full co-operation in these efforts? May we not put aside our quarrels, for the time being at any rate?

It shames me to think that while we are bandying words and flying at each other's throats, we feel no hesitation in bending our knees to desert provinces like Sind, and sending out to them piteous appeals for doles of rice and wheat which they can ill afford to spare. Why do we not all stand and work together and settle down to the work of relieving suffering humanity?

Rightly or wrongly—rightly as all the world knows, wrongly as some pretend—the Ministry is in. The most frantic attempts made to dislodge it have failed and the most wishful thinking in the world will not bring in section 93. To my friends opposite, I would therefore say, accept us, since you must, and co-operate with us in our efforts to execute long range schemes for providing at least one square meal a day for our less fortunate brethren. Every additional blade of corn which we grow, every additional drop of necessary water which we let in and every drop of unnecessary water which we let out, will all be done for the common benefit of all, benefit for the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian, benefit for all constituencies, Mahasabha or Muslim, Congress or Communist.

May I say, in all humility, that talk, mere talk, noise, mere noise will lead us nowhere. If it does lead anywhere, it leads to frustration and sometimes to exasperation. I felt deeply grieved when, in a recent debate, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, whose leadership we left out of honest convictions, tauntingly told us the other day that we had sought shelter under the protective wings of Sir Nazimuddin, the leader of the Muslim League party in Bengal——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, no; under the Suhrawardy gang.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: That is not what I am referring to yet.

What Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu said in biting sarcasm is indeed very agreeably true! No truer words have ever been spoken on the floor of this House than that Sir Nazimuddin's wings are protective. They are not

merely protective, they are an honest pair of wings as well, and Providence has indeed been merciful that we were able, while there was yet time, to put ourselves under Sir Nazimuddin's protective leadership after extricating ourselves from Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu's deceptive leadership.

Last night, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu did me the honour of quoting from a private letter which I had written to him, for his own benefit. He read it without my permission, but that does not worry him in the least, because scruples have never been one of his strong points.

He belongs to that famous band of ex-Ministers who value friendship so long as friendship is profitable and who honour friends so long as friends can be exploited.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: On a point of order, Sir. Has this anything to do with the Irrigation budget?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: That letter contains a piece of wholesome advice which he very much needs, viz., that he was not to follow the footsteps of Dr. S. P. Mookerjee and not to go the way he goes. I am not in the least ashamed of the reference in it about Mr. Suhrawardy. In politics, as in day to day life, men shed old opinions and form new ones, in the light of experience. I did not previously know Mr. Suhrawardy at close quarters and the opinion I previously held of him was based on the blood-curdling stories I had heard from Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu (Loud cries and table-thumping from the Opposition benches). Working with Mr. Suhrawardy at close quarters, I am today attracted by his wonderful devotion to duty, just as, working with Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu at close quarters, I found things out and left his leadership (Loud cries and uproar and table-thumping from the Opposition benches).

And may I remind Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu that for four and a half years from 1937 to 1941, day in and day out, he called Mr. Fazlul Huq all manner of names, and made all manner of insinuations against him, but that when Mr. Fazlul Huq included him in his Cabinet, he became one of his most devoted henchmen? (There was continued table-thumping and uproarous noise from every side of the Opposition).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, all these are atrocious lies, and we cannot allow this sort of calumny to be made in the House (Loud cries from the Government party benches and countercries from the Opposition benches).

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Finally, Sir, (At this stage there was such a tremendous uproar and table-thumping from the Opposition benches as well as from the Government side that the voice of the Hon'ble Minister was absolutely inaudible at the reporters' table; the Hon'ble Minister, however, went on delivering his speech).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the Hon'ble Minister is simply indulging in irrelevant talks. I put that the question be now put.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: And, Sir, from what I know of Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu, he will yet form other alliances, until Nemesis overtakes him completely and does her inevitable work——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Amen! (At this stage when the Hon'ble Minister concluded his speech there was tremendous uproar and noisy demonstrations from both sides of the House when both Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu and the Hon'ble Minister concerned were making short replies and counter replies).

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, I congratulate Mr. Pain on his complete conversion (Again at this stage there was noisy demonstration and table-thumping from both sides of the House in which the voice of Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu was completely drowned) as——the latest member of the day of his party (Loud cries and countercries from both sides of the House).

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: "Congratulate me, if you must, on any complete emancipation."

Finally, Sir, Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu will allow me to correct the meaning which he has endeavoured to read into the words "Suhrawardy gang" which occur in the letter. They did not mean that Mr. Suhrawardy and his co-workers were gangsters, just as the Deputy Leader of the Bengal Congress Parliamentary Party, which is how Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu describes himself, is neither a Congressman nor a Congress leader. (Again tremendous uproar and cries and counter-cries from both sides.) Gangsters, Sir, are known by their methods, and from what we have seen of their methods, you and I, Sir, can have no doubt in our mind about the identity of the gangsters in the province of Bengal (Loud noise and table-thumping).

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. I must now put the motions to vote.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: May we know, Sir, whether Mr. Pain was practising as a criminal lawyer before he became a Minister?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 48,13,000 for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation", etc., be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Adwaita Kumar Maji that the demand of Rs. 48,13,000 for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation", etc., be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The main demand of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna Pain that a sum of Rs. 48,13,000 be granted for expenditure under the heads "XVII—Irrigation", etc., was then put and agreed to.

It will not be possible to detain the House long. I will simply call upon the Ministers in charge to move the motions and I do not think it will be possible to call upon the members who have put in their cut motions: and then I will put the demands straight to vote.

50—Civil Works and 81—Civil Works not charged to Revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,06,16,000 be granted for expenditure under the heads "50—Civil Works" and "81—Civil Works not charged to Revenue".

The motion was put and agreed to.

43—Industries—Industries.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 17,83,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Industries".

The motion was then put and agreed to.

43—Industries—Cinchona.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 12,25,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "43—Industries—Cinchona".

The motion was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 5-4 p.m. till 9 a.m. on Saturday, the 25th September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 25th September, 1943, at 9 a.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 13 Hon'ble Ministers and 194 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

A.R.P. recruits in Chittagong.

***66. Dr. SANAULLAH:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Defence) Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing—

(*a*) the number of paid officers recruited in the A.R.P. in Chittagong district;

(*b*) the number of upper division clerks;

(*c*) the number of clerks other than upper division clerks; and

(*d*) the number of posts in (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) that are held by Muslims?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME (DEFENCE) DEPARTMENT (Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): As at 31st January, 1943.

(*a*) 30.

(*b*) 3.

(*c*) 16.

(*d*) (*a*) 11, (*b*) 1 and (*c*) 8.

Delegation to Tripartite Labour Conference at Delhi.

***67. Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department be pleased to state whether the Government of Bengal was consulted by the Government of India for inviting delegates from Bengal to attend Tripartite Labour Conference held on the 6th and 7th September, 1943, at New Delhi.

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who were the persons nominated by him?

(*c*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of moving the Government of India that in future such delegation to the Tripartite Labour Conference should be done through Provincial Government?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMERCE, LABOUR and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (Mr. Syed Abdul Majid on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin): (*a*) Yes, only as regards representatives of Independent Employers and Unions, *i.e.*, those not affiliated to All-India Organisations.

(*b*) (*i*) Mr. Ziauddin Ahmed, President, Calcutta Corporation Employees' Union.

(*ii*) Mr. R. S. Purssell, Agent, Calcutta Tramways Co., Ltd.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there are any other unions which are not affiliated to the All-India Organisation?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: I ask for notice.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the consideration for selecting the President of the Calcutta Corporation Employees' Union in preference to other unions?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: He was nominated on account of the fact that he represented the Calcutta Corporation Employees' Union which is a very important association.

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answer to which was laid on the table)

Outbreak of malaria in Tippera.

32. Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that—

(*i*) there is a serious outbreak of malaria in epidemic form in the rural areas of the district of Tippera; and

(*ii*) the situation has been very much aggravated by the non-supply of quinine in the affected areas?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps, if any, the Government have taken or propose to take in order to combat the situation?

MINISTER in charge of the PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*)(*i*) No, but the onset of malaria has been more severe than usual in certain areas.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) Five temporary medical licentiates were appointed at the cost of Government for carrying out anti-malaria duties in the vitally affected areas.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the areas affected by malaria in the district of Tippera?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that there has been a stealth of quinine to the extent of 78 lbs. from the office of the District Board of which Khan Bahadur Abidur Reza Choudhury, M.L.A., is the Chairman and Khan Sahib Fariduddin Ahmed, M.L.C., is the Vice-Chairman?

Mr. SPEAKER: Your question does not strictly arise out of the main question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state with reference to answer (*b*) about the appointment of medical licentiates, what amount of quinine has been allotted to the district during the particular period as compared with the previous period?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Additional 100 lbs. of quinine sulphate has been granted for the District Board which has been handed over to the Chairman.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: How was this 100 lbs. distributed?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: It was distributed through the agency of the District Board.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that out of this 100 lbs. nearly 80 lbs. was lost because it was stolen or somebody managed to get it disappeared while in the custody of the Chairman?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What is the report of Government regarding the missing quinine from the District Board office?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Whether it arises or does not arise, it is for the Speaker to say. Don't arrogate to yourself the Speaker's function.

Mr. SPEAKER: Khan Sahib, when you reply "no", they have got a right to know on what authority you say so.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, Dr. Sanyal did not ask that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Has the attention of the Government of Bengal been drawn to any report of any loss of quinine or theft of quinine from the District Board office of Tippera?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In view of the definite allegations made on the floor of the House just now, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government consider the desirability of enquiring as to whether there has been any abuse of quinine?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Government will make an enquiry.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the agencies through which quinine is being distributed to the malaria-stricken people?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Dispensaries as well as the Public Health staff of the District Board.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in the last session Maulvi Shahedali, M.L.A., put a question as regards loss of quinine and that was denied by Government?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. M. A. F. HIRTZEL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what the qualifications of temporary medical licentiates are and whether there is any new department?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Generally they are passed doctors of Government Medical Schools or recognised Medical Schools.

High prices in controlled shops and Government shops.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: May I invite your attention, Sir, and the attention of the Government to the serious state of affairs prevailing in some of the controlled shops in Calcutta and Government shops where prices are being charged higher than those notified under the Government press-note to be the proper prices. I have got a letter of complaint from one Babu Haridas Chatterji, a very respectable citizen and son of Babu Gurudas Chatterji inviting the attention of the Food Executive Officer that though Government notified 7 annas as the price of *atta* per seer from the 27th August, 1943, he was charged 8 annas per seer and to that the Food Executive Officer officially replied that the Government order reducing the price was received in the office late and therefore for some days the stores were charging higher prices. We would like to know whether there is any black-marketing to be permitted by Government shops and whether Government shops will be permitted to charge higher prices when press notifications are issued directing all and sundry to charge lower prices?

The second point I would like to know is whether Government have made any arrangement to see that the supplies against rations are maintained. For some days in the last few weeks no *atta* was available in my quarter. We are told that so far as wheat and wheat products are concerned they have arrived in Calcutta in plenty and yet, Sir, for a number of days in the last few weeks no wheat has been supplied to people who have got ration cards issued and are attached to Government shops. In this connection we would also like to enquire whether Government have made any arrangements to provide the customers, that is, the public with any ration, that cannot be

supplied in a particular week, in the following week when supplies can be available. The position has been most deplorable because once the ration-card holder goes to a shop and does not get the ration he is not allowed the ration which they cannot supply on the following day or week. The whole ration goes absolutely lapsed.

Mr. SPEAKER: That will do.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I was waiting for the Hon'ble Chief Minister or the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies to come and reply. That is the reason why I have been speaking for some time. The Government shops are black-marketing. They are charging higher prices than what the Government themselves notified they should charge by which the public shopkeepers are bound. For some days no *atta* is available and no mustard oil is available in shop No. B9 at 202, Rash Behari Avenue. Sir, we would like to know what arrangements Government are making to prosecute the persons who are responsible for charging higher prices and whether they are liable under the Defence of India Rules to be prosecuted as others have been prosecuted.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: If evidence is there——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have put it in already.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: We will take most drastic steps against any one, whether Government shops, control shops, *bana* shops or any other shops charging higher prices than those fixed by Government.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Hon'ble Minister's answer relates to only one part of the question and the other part of the question has not been answered. What about supply that Government shopkeepers, for days together cannot supply to ration-card holders attached to Government shops?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think Sir Nazimuddin has said that he will take all possible steps.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not the point, Sir. He has not touched the question I have just now put.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is because he was not here then.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have specifically put the case of shop No. B9 located at 202, Rash Behari Avenue. For days together no *atta* had been given to the ration-card holders. For weeks no mustard oil has been given and yet these people when they go back again are told that their former quota has lapsed. From where will they get supplies? They are attached to particular shops and if they do not get them there where will they get them from? Government must make arrangements, if they fail to supply in a particular week due to exigencies, to supply as soon as the supply comes in the following week. It is not fair to tell the ration-card holder that his supply has lapsed.

Further I submit that the measure used in the Government shops is found to be short in weighment. In certain commodities the shortage has been found to be as high as 20 per cent.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is enough.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: May I have information from the Hon'ble Chief Minister about one thing? I have got information from my district which has been declared to be a surplus district——

Mr. SPEAKER: Will you kindly resume your seat? If there is anything of such urgency as has been pointed out by Dr. Sanyal that *atta* is not available, mustard oil is not available and so on I can allow it. It is a thing which I can understand, but if you go on talking about the district having been declared a surplus district I cannot allow it.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: I am on a point of information. Though the district has been declared to be a surplus district under pressure yet in the northern part of the district, namely, Nilphamari, we get no rice at all and people are dying in hundreds.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sarkar, will you kindly resume your seat?

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, I want to draw your attention to a very serious matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. If it is such a very serious and urgent matter your leader is here and he ought to speak. I cannot allow each and every member to speak in this way.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I was not aware that any Government shop had not been able to supply *atta*. But there was shortage of *atta* in the city until the mills began to get in sufficient supplies. The honourable member is aware that people in Calcutta have not yet been rationed. These Government distributing centres have been opened for the purpose of giving facilities to people within certain zones but there is no guarantee by Government that they would get all their quota from these shops. These shops have been opened to provide facilities. Some time ago the supply of mustard oil has been discontinued from these shops because the price of mustard oil has gone far beyond the controlled price and it is not possible for Government to supply mustard oil at a rate higher than the controlled price.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

40—Agriculture.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,33,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture".

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sarkar, you have got 3 motions standing in your name.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: I shall move all the motions together.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, and make one speech. We have only 30 minutes for Agriculture.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Sir, I shall be very brief. I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of this motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to fix economic minimum price of jute.

Sir, the all absorbing question of food supply has sent the important question of economic price of jute to the background. It is a matter for great regret that at this time Government are not taking any steps to increase or raise the price of jute. At present at least 3 maunds of jute are required to have one maund of rice. Therefore it has gone far below the economic price. On the other hand the vested interests of this country are not idle. In the month of June an agreement was arrived at by the Jute Mill-owners of this Province with the Government of the United States of America that 70 crores yards of hessian would be supplied to the U. S. A. Government at a particular price and in order to make that price working, various kinds of tricks are being played on the agriculturists of this country. The Jute Mill owners have practically fixed the price of jute at a standard which is not quite economic and which has gone below the requirements of the agriculturists. What is being done to put down the price can be clearly understood if I be allowed to quote a few lines from a letter of Mr. J. N. Bhattacharjee published very recently in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. It says: "It was arranged, firstly, that the U. S. Government would not buy any raw jute in India until the order had been completed; secondly, that the British Ministry of Supply would not buy any jute in India at a price higher than the price dictated by the Jute Mills; and thirdly, the Indian Railways and Steamer Services would not load any jute in the jute districts which would not give direct delivery to the mills." Thus assured from all quarters the Jute Mills Association have accepted the order of the U. S. Government. Therefore it will be seen that a regular conspiracy is going on and has been arrived at between the Jute Mills Association and the United States Government, the British Government and the Government of India. Now, it has to be seen what the Government of Bengal is doing to break through this conspiracy. If they say that they are not going to do anything, I assert that it will be a direct betrayal of the cause of the agriculturists of this country. I assert, also, Sir, that if the Ministry of Bengal now give a fight to break through this conspiracy they will get the co-operation of all sections of this House and of the people of the country. If they do not do anything, it will be evident that to secure the votes of the Europeans in this Legislature they are sitting tight. Of course, the rice problem has become very acute: people are dying in hundreds and thousands in the streets. If at

the same time the price of jute also goes down and it keeps at the level at which the Jute Mill owners are trying to keep it, I think that such a position will arise in the country that it will be beyond remedy. I may warn the conspirators or the persons who are trying to keep down the price of jute, that if the Japanese now throw down from their aeroplanes bags of Burma rice, that will be more efficacious than their bombs that are expected to be thrown. They must take this warning that if they want that Burma should be reconquered it is better to have internal security in the country. Without money and without food no people can co-operate with a Government or any set of people in a devastating war.

Sir, I now move my next motion, namely, that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of this motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to provide agricultural land to landless people in order to grow more food to intensify war efforts.

We see, Sir, that people are daily coming from countryside to the town and other places, leaving their lands, for want of food. If arrangements are not immediately made for sending back these landless and other starving people to their native places and also arrangements are not made to give land to them so that they may try to grow more food, the countryside will be devastated and instead of the problem being solved it will grow more and more acute. What is needed now is a drastic law or ordinance to seize all the culturable fallow lands in Bengal and distribute them among the landless people and to try to settle them there so that they can grow food in greater quantity even now.

Sir, I now move the third motion standing in my name, namely, that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of this motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to give sufficient facilities to agriculturists to grow more food crops in order to intensify war efforts.

Sir, what is needed in this connection now is economic planning in order to grow more food. The Government should at once take up measures for irrigation for reclaiming waste lands and for opening water channels in order to bring under cultivation lands from those areas which are water-logged: they should distribute free seeds and enough money by way of agricultural loan or gratuitous relief to agriculturists so that they may take to cultivation.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit but was allowed one minute more to finish.)

Their debts are growing, arrears are accumulating but the Government is practically sitting idle. We want some plan so that people may grow more food and take more food in order to live a decent life, and if then the Government want co-operation from them they may give fuller co-operation.

With these words, Sir, I commend my motions to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to take adequate steps to enable the jute growers to get a proper and economic price for raw jute during the current jute season.

Sir, I would remind the House that during the month of December last the Government of India requested the Bengal Government to grow jute in eight annas of the jute area while the Government of Bengal wanted to produce jute in only one-third of the area. Sir, the contention of the Government of Bengal was that Bengal needed more food crop and so the cultivation of jute should be so restricted that more land might be available for paddy cultivation and also that Bengal jute growers might get a fair and economic price. From those points of view the Bengal Government insisted upon the production of jute in only one-third of the jute area, but due to the pressure of the Government of India the Government of Bengal yielded and agreed to allow jute to be grown in half of the total jute area. I would also remind the House that when they agreed to that situation the Bengal Government extracted a promise from the Government of India that if the price of jute would fall below the economic level the Government of India should come to the rescue of the jute growers. Sir, the then Chief Minister assured the House that the Government of India gave that promise in writing and there was no fear of the jute growers getting an economic price. That was the position up till December last. In June last, at the instance of the Government of India the Jute Mills Association made a contract with the Government of the United States and that of the United Kingdom for supply of hessian at Rs. 26 for 11 qrs. and Rs. 19-8 for 8 qrs. Now, when this agreement between the Government of India and the Jute Mills Association was being effected, the price of rice ruling in Bengal was Rs. 30 per maund. May I ask the House to consider that while the price of rice was ruling at a rate of Rs. 30 and over per maund, was it fair on the part of the Government of India to fix the price, or at least agree to the fixation of the price, of hessian at Rs. 26? At any rate the Jute Mills Association was forced by the Government of India to agree to supply hessian at Rs. 26 per 11 qrs. The result was that in their turn the Jute Mills Association fixed the maximum price of jute at Rs. 19 for the top, Rs. 17 for the middle and Rs. 14 for the bottom. There was no price fixed for rejected jute. All this was done with full knowledge that the price so fixed was not economical for the jute grower to get. And yet the Government of India acquiesced in the fixation of the maximum price of jute by the Indian Jute Mills Association. The irresistible conclusion is that there was a conspiracy between the Government of India and the Jute Mills Association to keep down the price of jute so that the United Kingdom and the United States Governments might get hessian at a lesser price. This will further be evident from the fact that the Jute Mills Association publicly expressed their intention to continue to accept Government orders at concessional prices. This fact we have got through

a responsible officer of the Indian Central Jute Committee who was deputed by the Indian Central Jute Committee to enquire into this matter. He reported to that committee that the Indian Jute Mills Association expressed to him their intention to continue—mark the words, Sir,—to continue to accept Government orders at concessional prices. They did not consider the question whether the prices offered to the jute grower was economic or not, but they were to supply, rather they were determined to supply jute and jute products to the Government of the United Kingdom and to the United States of America at concessional rates. Sir, I would now ask the Government of Bengal what have they done to break through this conspiracy. I asked the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture the other day—I 'phoned to him—what were the Government of Bengal doing? He said "We can do nothing but to protest". I said "That is not sufficient. Should not the Government of Bengal in view of their agreement with the Government of India approach the Government of India to come to the rescue of the jute grower at this time"? To that the Hon'ble Minister gave no satisfactory reply. He knows that the price policy is dictated by the Jute Mills and when the Jute Mills have once fixed the maximum price the price would not go up. It was now up to the Government of Bengal to move on behalf of the jute growers in the right direction to raise the price and the best course was to approach the Government of India to come at that stage to the rescue of the jute growers. Did the Government of Bengal do anything like that? If the Government of India refused to interfere with the fixation of price by mills, then the Government of Bengal might ask the Government of India to purchase the entire quantity of raw jute at a proper and economic price. Did the Government of Bengal consider that step? I think they did not.

Sir, after all if the Government of Bengal failed in their attempts to persuade the Government of India to do either of the two things I have just mentioned, the Government of Bengal might take courage in both hands and fix the minimum price of raw jute in order to enable the jute grower to get a fair price. Did the Government of Bengal contemplate passing such a legislation? They did not. Sir, the Government of Bengal have in a way, expressed and implied, assured the jute growers of Bengal that they would get a fair price if they grow jute this year. That assurance was communicated through a press-note and the agreement with the Government of India was also mentioned in that press-note. Sir, I ask, have the Government of India considered the fact that this jute is being grown at the cost of Bengal's food crop in order to supply raw material to the United Kingdom and to U.S.A.? Did the Government of Bengal also consider the fact that a large portion of that jute was to be exported to South Africa? After the Pegging Act of South Africa has been enacted was it fair or was it just for the United Kingdom to ask Bengal to produce jute at the cost of their own food to supply jute to South Africa?

Sir, this has been the position of the jute growers in Bengal, but the Government of Bengal, whose primary duty is to look to the interests of the jute growers and for whose interests the Bengal Jute Regulation Act was

passed, was not moving an inch in that matter. Probably, as my friend Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar has pointed out, they are afraid of taking any step because they know if they take any step they will antagonise the European bloc and the European bloc will *en bloc* revolt against such a measure and they will lose their Ministership. That is the point, otherwise the Bengal Government are in duty bound to look to the interest of the jute growers at this critical time. A jute grower has got to sell four maunds of jute to get one maund of rice. In spite of the price control policy having been adopted rice is selling at no less than Rs. 45 per maund in the jute area even today. I got a letter from my own village yesterday that rice was selling at Re. 1-4 per seer although the price control policy has been adopted. Sir, that being the position in the jute districts the jute growers are being ruined. I ask the Minister in charge to take courage in both hands and to adopt some measures to raise the price of jute in order to save the jute growers. He should remember that upon the prosperity of jute growers depends the prosperity of the whole Bengali nation. He knows that jute is the chief money crop of Bengal and by selling jute Bengal gets money from outside and he should see that Bengal should get as much money as possible from outside Bengal by selling jute. I ask the Government what have they done to save the situation in which the jute growers have fallen today.

Sir, I would draw your attention to one fact that this subject was discussed at the last meeting of the Indian Central Jute Committee of which I am a member and the Indian Central Jute Committee which is a part and parcel of the Government of India have also expressed their views in this matter. I would draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the resolution that was passed in that meeting so that he may take light about what he is expected to do. I would read only an excerpt from that resolution. In the resolution the following sentences appear:—

"It appears further to be the wish of the Committee that the proceedings of this meeting should be sent to the Government of India with the request that they may re-examine the position as regards the price which is being paid for jute goods in the light of the various considerations that have been brought forward before the Committee. In particular, it may be pointed out to them that the price of jute is very much out of parity with the prices of foodgrains and the other articles which the jute grower has got to purchase. It may further be suggested to the Government of India that in fixing the price of the finished product and, consequently, also of the raw material they should take into consideration the increase in the cost of living and try to arrive at a reasonable price for jute and therefrom also for jute goods. It may be pointed out at the same time that if this is not done, there is a serious danger that the growing of jute next year may go down very considerably which will injure the jute industry not only for the time being but for all time."

Sir, had I the power, I could pass such a law that no jute should be grown in Bengal any more unless and until the price policy is transferred to the hands of the jute grower. The Government of Bengal set up a Jute Enquiry Committee. That committee recommended that as the jute growers

were disorganised while the jute mills were organised there must be set up an organisation to sell the entire output of jute of Bengal on behalf of the jute growers so that that association might dictate the price, but the Government of Bengal did not pay any heed to the recommendation of the Jute Committee. It was made as far back as 1940. Sir, I ask the Hon'ble Minister what is Government doing? I say that the case of the jute growers and thus of the Bengali nation in this aspect has been relegated to a back position in view of course of the most pressing question of food, but after all jute also is no less important a matter and the jute price also is no less important a factor for the jute growers and the Bengalis at the present moment.

(At this stage the member reached his time limit but was allowed to continue for two minutes more.)

Sir, I will draw the attention of the House to another fact. Rupees 26 has been fixed as the price of hessian which the mills will get from the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. Government. This price of Rs. 26 the mills will get for 100 yards of hessian. Now, this 100 yards of hessian will weigh not more than 23 seers of jute. This product of 23 seers of jute the mills will get at Rs. 26 taking the price as it is fixed. I think I may tell the House without any fear of contradiction that this hessian is made of a mixture of middle and bottom. The price of "middle" has been fixed at Rs. 17 and the price of "bottom" has been fixed at Rs. 14. If you take a mixture of the two, the price will come to Rs. 15-8. If the price for one maund is Rs. 15-8, what will be the price of this 23 seers of jute? You may calculate and it will not be more than Rs. 8 or Rs. 10. Take it to be Rs. 12, but the price of the finished product is Rs. 26! During the pre-war days the cost of manufacture did never rise beyond Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 for hundred yards of hessian. Take the cost of manufacture to be double of that or Rs. 8. Now if the price of jute is Rs. 12 and the cost of manufacture is Rs. 8, then the total comes to Rs. 20. Therefore the jute mills are making a net profit of at least Rs. 6 for hundred yards of hessian. (Mr. J. R. WALKER: Nonsense.) Yes, you will say "nonsense", but I can show you facts and figures. Have you got the courage to face them? I know how you camouflage the figures, how you bungle matters. I know you all. Can you say conscientiously that it is fair for them to offer only Rs. 15 to the jute growers while they get hundred yards of hessian for Rs. 26? These people are public enemy No. 1 so far as jute growers are concerned. If the Government of Bengal have any sincere motive or intention to serve the people of Bengal and her agriculturists they should rise equal to the occasion, take courage in both hands and serve the interests of the jute growers at whose instance they have come here and have captured these *gaddis*, and not at the instance of these gentlemen. If they have that courage, they should flout their opinion and in that case they would get our co-operation. We do not want to share in the Ministry. Come and join us and try to evolve a formula how to break the conspiracy and how to give a fair price to our jute growers.

Srijut ASHUTOSH MULLICK: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about—

(*i*) ineffectiveness and wastefulness in the "Grow More Food" Campaign;

(*ii*) failure to promote the cultivation of substitute crops in the flood affected areas of Burdwan, Hooghly, Bankura and Midnapore;

(*iii*) failure to arrange more extensive sowing of potatoes and sugarcane cultivation; and

(*iv*) failure to maintain a reasonably high and fair price for jute in the current season.

মিঃ স্পীকার, স্যার, আমার কার্য্যকরী ছাঁটাই প্রস্তাব সম্বন্ধে এই যে পাটের কথা, সে বিষয়ে আমার শ্রদ্ধেয় বন্ধু বিশ্বাস মহাশয় অনেক বলেছেন। আমি এই পাট সম্বন্ধে কিছু বলছি না, তার কারণ, অনেক কথা আছে যা বলবামাত্রই তা বলার প্রয়োজনটা ফুরিয়ে যায় এবং তার পুনরুক্তি দোষাবহ। রাত পোহালে সকাল হয়, একথা বারবার বলে কোন লাভ নাই, কিন্তু বাংলাদেশের বর্ত্তমান খাদ্য-সমস্যা সম্বন্ধে কোন কিছু বলা যেন অমৃতবাণী। তাহা যতবার যত প্রকারে বলা হউক, তাহার সমাধান না হওয়া পর্য্যন্ত ঐ বিষয়ের পুনরাবৃত্তির প্রয়োজন যেন বেড়ে যাচ্ছে। এ যদি শুধু তর্কের বিষয়ীভূত একটা কিছু হ'ত তবে উহা তর্কের আঘাতে আঘাতে কবে চূর্ণ হ'য়ে যেত। কেন না এতো কোন বিশেষ মতের বা বিশেষ সম্প্রদায়ের ডাক নয়। সমস্ত মানবের মধ্যে প্রাণধারণের প্রচেষ্টা যে চিরন্তন সত্য আছে, এ যে তারই ডাক। কলরবের অন্ত নাই। কোলাহল আকাশকে মথিত করছে। সমস্ত বাঙ্গালীর প্রাণের কেন্দ্রস্থল থেকে এযে অনির্ব্বচনীয়রূপে আত্মপ্রকাশ করছে। বাংলার খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমস্ত বৈষয়িকতা, সমস্ত দ্বেষ, বিদ্বেষ, ভাগ, বিভাগ, ভেদাভেদ প্রভৃতিকে ছাড়িয়ে মাথা চাড়া দিয়ে উঠেছে। কিছুতেই একে আর ধামাচাপা দিয়ে রাখা চলে না। কিন্তু, বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী ভোগের মধু-পাত্রের মধ্যে আপনার দুই ডানা জড়িয়ে ফেলে বসে আছেন। বুদ্ধি, অভিমানী জোনাকী পোকার মতো আপনার পুচ্ছের আলোক সীমার বাইরে আর সমস্তকেই অস্বীকার করছেন (laughter)। আবার শুধু তাই নয়, হাস্যরসিকের শ্রেষ্ঠত্ববোধে ভূতপূর্ব্ব মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর অক্ষমতাকে পরিহাস করেন। যে পা পিছলাইয়া আছাড় পড়িয়াছে তাহাকে লইয়া সেই পরিহাস করিতে পারে যে কখনও নিজে পড়িয়া যায় নাই। আবার খাদ্য-সমস্যার আলোচনায় সচিবসঙ্ঘের পৃষ্ঠপোষক সদস্যবৃন্দ কৌতুক অনুভব করেন। দুই পক্ষের মারামারি লইয়া তাঁহারাই কৌতুক অনুভব করিতে পারেন যাঁরা মারামারি হইতে সম্পূর্ণ নিলিপ্ত। তাঁদের আচরণে নিলিপ্ততাই প্রকাশ পায়। কিন্তু খাদ্য-সমস্যা সম্বন্ধে সজাগ লোকের কাছে এঁরা সবচেয়ে কৌতুকের পাত্র। এই সব স্বপ্নপালিত নরপুরে তাঁহারা খাদ্য-সমস্যার সমাধান সম্বন্ধে জাগিয়াও ঘুমাইয়া আছেন কিম্বা ঘুমাইয়া জাগিয়া আছেন। উভয়ই অদ্ভুত রকমের। উক্ত বিষয়ে তাঁহারা যা জানেন তাহা স্বপ্নের আবেশে কিম্বা স্বার্থের মোহে কিম্বা অক্ষমতার ঔদাসীন্যে ভাল করিয়া বিবেচনা করেন না। এই বর্ত্তমান খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমাধানের পথ কখনই সহজ ও সরল নহে। বাংলা সরকারের খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমাধানের সবগুলি পথ বৃটিশ ব্যুরোক্রেশীর প্রদর্শিত চিরাভ্যস্ত পথের সহিত মিশিয়া জড়াইয়া গোলকধাঁধা সৃষ্টি করিয়াছে। কাজেই সরকারের কর্ম্মচারিগণ সে পথে চলতে গিয়ে, গন্তব্য-স্থানে না পৌঁছাইয়া গোল বাঁধাইয়া বসেন। জেলার সরকারী কর্ম্মচারিগণের অনুষ্ঠানের বাঁধা-রীতিতে বর্ত্তমান খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমাধানকল্পে যে উদ্যম প্রকাশ পায় সে যে একটা অদ্ভুত বিড়ম্বনা,

মরীচিকার মত সে যে কেবল জলকে দেখায় অথচ তৃষ্ণা বহন করে। British Administrationএর মুস্কিল হয়েছে সে আপনার সংসার দিয়ে আপনার চারিদিকে একটা আবরণ সৃষ্টি করেছে। সে যেন বলে আকাশের আলোকে আমি বিশ্বাস করি না। আমার ঘরের মাটীর প্রদীপকে আমি বিশ্বাস করি। আলোক নূতন কিন্তু আমার এই দীপ সনাতন। ঘরের কোণের অন্ধকার পুরাতন—তাকেই সে পূজা করে। সেটাতে তার শয়নগৃহের বিষাক্ত বাতাস জমা হয়ে রয়েছে, সেইটাতেই সে পড়ে থাকতে চায়, কারণ সে হ'ল তার সঞ্চিত বাতাস। সে নতুন বাতাস নয়। ঈশ্বরের আলো, ঈশ্বরের বাতাস কেবল নতুনকেই আনে, সুতরাং তাকে সে বিশ্বাস করতে পারে না। সাম্প্রদায়িকতার আদর্শ নিজের প্রতাপকে অভ্রভেদী করে দুর্ব্বলের গলা টিপে তার রক্তপান করছে—এমন কথা সে কি বলতে পারে? মানুষ, মানুষকে খেয়ে বেঁচে থাকবে—এই হবে? ইতিহাস বিধাতা কি তাই হ'তে দেবেন? ইতিহাস বিধাতা কি আমাদের বাংলাদেশের আশা একেবারে ত্যাগ করেছেন? দুর্গতির পর দুর্গতি, দুঃখের পর দুঃখ দিয়ে তিনি আমাদের দেশকে বলছেন তুমি যে আবর্জনার স্তূপ জমিয়েছ তা তোমাকে আশ্রয় দিতে পারবে না। উদ্বোধনের প্রলয় মন্ত্রে আজ পৃথিবী জেগেছে। এখন আর বসে থাকবার সময় নয়। কোণের মধ্যে তামসিকায় আকণ্ঠ নিমজ্জিত হয়ে থাকবার সময় নয়। বলবার, চলবার, ভাঙ্গবার ডাক আজ এসেছে। নতুন হতে হবে—এ যেন কামান গর্জ্জনের ধ্বনির ভিতর দিয়ে ঐ কথাই শোনা যাচ্ছে। এই বাণী কি আসে নি? মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী কি এ কথা শোনেন নি? এই কথা বলে আমি আমার ছাঁটাই প্রস্তাবের প্রতি মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি, এবং এই প্রসঙ্গে আরো দু-একটা কথা বলতে চাই। এই বিভাগে যেভাবে কার্য্যপদ্ধতি পরিচালনা হয় তার সমস্তই অপচয় হয়, এর কোনটাই কাজে লাগে না। আমরাও বুঝতে পারি কোন কাজে কোন টাকা বরাদ্দ হয় বেশী,—সেটা যদি একটু বিভাগ করে দেওয়া হয়। যেমন এত টাকা propaganda purposeএ ব্যয় হবে, আর বাকী টাকাটা বীজেতে ব্যয় হবে। এইভাবে খরচ হবে। তারপর আমরা দেখতে পাই যে অধিকাংশ টাকাটাই travelling allowanceএর দরুণ ব্যয় হয়। আমার সময় খুব অল্প, সুতরাং আমি খুব সংক্ষেপে চাষের বিষয়ে দু-একটী কথা বলবো। বাংলাদেশে, বিশেষতঃ পশ্চিমবঙ্গে যে সমস্ত ফসল উৎপন্ন হতে পারে যেমন আলু, আক ইত্যাদি—এই সমস্ত থেকে আমরা দেখতে পাই যে লোকের মনে একটা প্রবৃত্তি হয়েছে বেশী করে খাদ্য জন্মাবার। আজ এই যে দেশের লোকের ভিতর বেশী করে খাদ্যদ্রব্য জন্মাবার প্রচেষ্টা হচ্ছে, সেটা কি গভর্ণমেণ্ট মনে করেন যে তাঁদের চেষ্টায় হয়েছে? তা আমি মোটেই মনে করি না। সেটা কেবলমাত্র আত্মরক্ষা করবার জন্য মানুষের যে সনাতন প্রবৃত্তি, সেই প্রবৃত্তি এর পিছনে রয়েছে। সেইটাতে বশীভূত হয়ে মানুষ এই কাজ করছে। কিন্তু, আমি বলছি—

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

Mr. C. MORGAN: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about seed shortage and the necessity for an adequate organisation for the distribution of seeds.

Sir, my reason for moving this cut motion is to draw the attention of Government, and also of honourable members of this House, to the dangerous position of the seed position, not only for this coming Winter season but the

position which is looming in front of us as regards the 1944 *aus* and *aman* paddy crops.

To deal with the coming Winter crop, I will give this House specific instances of the present hopeless position.

A well-known Zemindary concern has given me the following particulars:—

Now is the time for sowing *Chaitali* and Winter crops. The concern has been trying to get a seed supply for their tenants for these crops but has been unable to get any. In Rajshahi application was made to the District Agricultural Officer at Bilmaria on 9th September and he replied that he was endeavouring to purchase *Chaitali* seeds for distribution, but had been unable to buy any and he suggested that the Zemindary concern should undertake to obtain a quantity of seed for Government. It was intimated to him that it was too late to guarantee that seeds could be purchased from other districts and provinces, and that it was pointless to try to buy seeds within the district since presumably these will be available for purchase by tenants. The Agricultural Officer at Berhampore said they had no seeds for disposal.

This means that large areas will remain fallow or at best be sown with inferior seed. The same lack of foresight affected *Bhadol* sowings when cultivators in Murshidabad were obliged to sow vast areas of good paddy lands with inferior crops such as *Kuda* and Sewa, as they could not get other seed.

Some 30,000 maunds of seeds are required at once for the tenants of this zemindary to save the situation, and the question is how it can be procured. Has Government any satisfactory reply to this question? Now if this is happening in Rajshahi, Nadia and Murshidabad it surely must be happening in other districts in Bengal.

I will pass on to the *aus* and foodgrains seed prospects for 1944. If the 1943 crop shows no surplus, and people all over Bengal are starving as is stated, then how can Government expect to get the paddy and other seeds sufficient to sow over 26 million acres next year? And if the quantity required, 150 lakhs of maunds paddy is not procurable from our 1943 crops at harvest time, how will the Province fare as regards the 1944 *aus* and *aman* paddy and foodgrains sowing? Are we faced with complete starvation a year hence?

What I want to impress upon Government now is that a Seed Supply Service should be brought into being at once. There are plenty of people in the mufassal who are working only part time in Co-operative Societies, Jute regulation units and Debt Settlement establishments, and the organising of a Seed Supply Service can be done by taking a certain number of people from these other units for part-time work, as the seed supply work would have to be done in the districts at harvest time.

The Paddy and Rice Committee, of which I was a member stated in their report, which I recommend all honourable members to study carefully in paragraph 109 as follows:—

> ".....hitherto it—the Department of Agriculture—has lacked both the organisation and staff necessary for a Seed Supply Service that could meet the seed requirements of the many millions for Bengal's paddy growers".

The Paddy and Rice Committee were dealing with the question of pure seed supply in particular, but their remarks apply with equal force to seed supply generally.

The pure seed supply question is baffling the Department of Agriculture and is still being considered by the Board of Agriculture, Veterinary and Cattle Husbandry, of which I am a member, the main difficulties being—

(1) Continued supply of fresh pure seed; and

(2) General demonstration for the actual getting of improved results to the cultivator.

This however does not mean that Government can sit back and await results of discussions. Government must act now and form a Seed Supply Service so that Bengal can be assured of sufficient seed for all crops in 1944. For the remaining months of 1943 the Department of Agriculture must do their best to tackle at once the Winter seed supply. As I have shown the position is very serious and cannot be brushed aside by making notes on files. Practical and immediate action is absolutely necessary, and I want to know what steps are being taken by Government to acquire a reserve of *aus* and *aman* seeds in view of the danger of a serious shortage. I would strongly urge the Government to purchase *aus* paddy seed now for next season's sowings and advertise the price they will give for really sound seed. What I have said is more or less what everyone is thinking. But here I must throw in a doubt—only a doubt—as Government has to reply. It is this—

If the 1943-44 paddy crops are to turn out what is said to be one of the largest on record, where did the seed for sowing come from?

The 1942-43 crops were poor and prices were high, yet the seed was there for the next crops sowing, namely, 1943-44.

Will Government tell this House how much paddy seed for sowing was actually distributed in 1943—this year—and how much they expect to have to distribute next year for the 1944-45 crop sowings?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Jonab Ali (No response). Mr. Hirtzel.

(At this time Maulvi Abdul Wahed rose to speak.)

I first called Mr. Jonab Ali and as he did not rise, I have called Mr. Hirtzel to move his amendment.

Mr. M. A. F. HIRTZEL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the necessity for improvement of crop statistics.

Sir, I do not think that at this stage there should be any need to raise a cut motion (in spite of a lot of conversation that is going on in this House), about the necessity to improve crop statistics. Bengal, India and to that extent the rest of the world have been informed for the past 20 years that the Bengal crop statistics are a farce. They were castigated by the Agricultural Commission; they were castigated by the Paddy and Rice Committee and in a very valuable note prepared by the then Commissioner of the Presidency Division, Mr. Townend. They are regularly, anually, referred to as merely conjectural guesses in the Government of India's own statistical publication. What we on this side of the House wish to know is what is being done about them. It is perfectly obvious that in a situation of this kind no forecast can be framed of what the future has in store and no rational planning for the present or for the future can be undertaken if there is no basis of fact. I assert, Sir, that throughout the duration of the current crisis and when it was coming on, it was unforeseen by the predecessors of the present Ministry because there was no basis of fact. There was no basis of fact to enable them to realise that there would be a crisis and no effort was made to provide a basis of fact. Sir, I venture to remind the House that I raised this subject myself in a letter to the Press in March last. If I may resume, I will read a small extract. I said: "It is evident that in an emergency such as the present this shortcoming is a disaster. It is equally evident that, if, in normal times, there is to be any scientific direction of agriculture for the benefit of those principally concerned, this deficiency must be made good. The present emergency will not have been without benefit if it compels action and there would appear to be no reason why, if the matter is handled in the forthright manner which emergencies require, there should not be a big improvement even so far as next year's crop is concerned. It is for the Ministry—the much lamented Huq Ministry—and the newly constituted Provincial Marketing Board to decide whether they will do something constructive and fundamental in this matter for the good of the people."

Well, Sir, the Standing Marketing Committee at the end of March recommended that action should be taken to set up a bureau of statistics. We received a very partial assurance that something might be done. We now wish to know, Sir, what the present Ministry proposes to do. I have no information at present on this point beyond an answer which I understand was recently given in another place to a question on this subject. That answer appears to indicate that certain proposals were made by the Director of Agriculture which, owing to the fact that they would cost 28 lakhs of rupees, have been postponed until conditions improve. I will only comment that conditions cannot improve without being made to improve. Secondly, we were told that a random census of jute, rice and paddy had been sanctioned: this was to be undertaken by Professor Mahalanobis at a cost of

Rs. 1½ lakhs. I am a very ill-informed person and I have not yet heard what the result of that random survey was. We were also informed on the 15th of September that another scheme for small census of *aman* paddy to be made by Professor P. C. Mahalanobis was under examination. We were also informed in connection with the proposal to set up a Provincial bureau of statistics that that was also under the consideration of the Government.

Well, Sir, I am not moving this cut motion to make a present of it to the Opposition (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: We have heard enough on that line). The Opposition have not shown themselves in a way that could have earned any present from me. I am moving this cut motion to bring the matter to the urgent notice of the Government and to remind them that while there is a time for consideration—and I myself fully admit that this is not an easy matter—that consideration must be ended and drastic action taken. We on this side of the House feel that this matter must now be tackled at once.

Maulvi ABDUL WAHED: মাননীয় সভাপতি সাহেব, আমার বন্ধু আবু হোসেন সাহেবের পাট সম্বন্ধে এবং grow more food অর্থাৎ অধিক খাদ্য জন্মান সম্বন্ধে যে সব motion আছে, আমি সেগুলি সমর্থন করে দু-চারটি কথা বলতে চাই। যেহেতু মাননীয় কৃষিমন্ত্রী মহোদয় আমার ময়মনসিংহ জেলার লোক এবং বাংলা দেশের মধ্যে ময়মনসিংহ সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ জেলা এবং সেখানে পাটই উৎপন্ন হয় বেশী, সুতরাং আমি তাঁকে প্রথমে এই কথাটি জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই। গভর্ণমেণ্ট ময়মনসিংহ জেলাকে surplus district অর্থাৎ অতিরিক্ত খাদ্য, ধানচাল উদ্বৃত্ত হয়েছে, এই বলে যে ঘোষণা করেছেন, সেই কথাটি তিনি জানেন কি না? এবং এটাও জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই যে, যে ময়মনসিংহ জেলার লোক বরাবরই রেঙ্গুন চাল খেয়ে বাঁচতো, সেই ময়মনসিংহ জেলাকে খাদ্য বাবদে উদ্বৃত্ত জেলা বলে ঘোষণা করা হিসাবটা, এমন একটা গাঁজাখুরী হিসাব, কোথা থেকে গভর্ণমেণ্ট পাইলেন? ময়মনসিংহ জেলায় চাষীদের সর্বদা নির্ভর করতে হয় পাটের উপর। পাট বিক্রয় করে বরাবরই চাষীরা এক মণ পাটের দাম দিয়ে, এক মণের নীচে চাল কোন সময় কেনে নাই। দু-মণ, তিন মণ চাল কিনেছে সময় মত। সে হিসাব মত যদি ধরা যায়, তবে এবারে সেই হিসাবে চালের দর, ৪০৲ টাকা মণ হ'ল কেন? লোকে সেই হিসাবে এক মণ চাল যদি পাবার অধিকারী হয়, তাহলে পাটের দরা অন্ততঃ ৪০৲ টাকা হওয়া উচিত। এবারে পাটের ফলন যত কম হয়েছে এবং চাহিদা যত বেশী, সেই হিসাবে আমাদের দাবী চাষীদের প্রতি মণ পাট এবারে ৮০৲/৯০৲ টাকা হওয়া উচিত ছিল। কিন্তু, পাটের কলের মালিক ইংরাজ সাহেবরা, এবং পাটের বণিক ব্যবসায়ী ইংরাজ সাহেবরা, তাঁরা সকলে মিলে মন্ত্রীদের হাত করে, আজকে দলবদ্ধ হয়ে স্থির করেছে যে ১৪৲ টাকা থেকে ১৯৲ টাকায় তারা পাট কিনবেন, তার উপরে দাম দেবেন না। কাজেই, কলিকাতার বাজারে যদি ১৪৲ টাকা, হইতে ১৯৲ টাকা পাটের দর হয়, তাহলে মফঃস্বলের বাজারে কিছুতেই চাষীরা ৫৲।৬৲ টাকার বেশী পেতে পারে না। এমনি করে যে লুটতরাজ, ডাকাতি করছে ইংরাজ সাহেবরা, বণিকরা এবং চট্‌কলের মালিকরা, আমাদের মন্ত্রীদের হাত করে নিয়ে, তাদের বাধ্য করে নিয়ে, এর জবাবদিহী কি করতে হবে না? নিশ্চয়ই, একদিন চাষীদের কাছে এর জবাবদিহী করতে হবে। (A voice : বাধ্য করে কি করে?) বাধ্য করেছে কি করে, আমার বন্ধুরা জিজ্ঞাসা করছেন। সেই মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের জামার ভিতর যে, এত বড় বড়

পকেট রয়েছে, তা কিসের জন্য, সেটা কি তাঁরা বুঝতে পারছেন না? সেগুলি ভর্ত্তি করে বাধ্য করেছেন। (Applause from Oppisition Benches) কাজেই আজকে আমাদের গৌরীপুরের বাজারের কথা কিছু বলতে পারি। সেখানে ছয়, সাত, আট টাকায় পাট বিক্রয় চলেছে, আর চাল বিক্রয় হচ্ছে ৩৬৲, ৩৭৲, ৩৮৲ টাকায়। এই হিসাবে যদি চাল বিক্রয় হতে থাকে, তবে চাষীরা কি করে বাঁচবে? আজকে ময়মনসিংহ জেলায়, চাষীদের মধ্যে প্রায় সাধারণতঃ, তারা ১২ মাস চাল কিনে খায়। ১৬ আনা লোকের ভিতর, প্রায় আট আনা লোক চাল আমদানী করে, দুই আনা লোক সামান্য চাল বিক্রয় করতে পারে, আর ছয় আনা লোক তারা কোন রকমে খেয়ে বাঁচে। এই যে দুরবস্থা, এই দুরবস্থার মধ্যে সারা ময়মনসিংহ জেলা, কিশোরগঞ্জ সাব-ডিভিশন, সদর, প্রত্যেকটী subdivision এই পাটের উপর নির্ভর করে থাকে, আর সেই সব পাট, আমাদের গ্রামে ঢুকে এই সমস্ত ডাকাত বণিকরা লুট করে নিচ্ছে আর আমাদের মন্ত্রীরা তাঁদের সমর্থন করছেন। তাঁরা কেন সমর্থন করছেন? তার কারণ, যদি এই সমস্ত দালাল সাহেবরা হাত ছাড়া হয়ে যায় তাহলে তাঁদের গদিচ্যুত হতে হবে। এই ভয়েতে তাঁদের সন্তুষ্ট রাখবার জন্য, তাঁরা এই সব বাংলার জনসাধারণ পাটচাষীদের সর্ব্বনাশ করে তাঁদের নিজেদের সবার পকেটগুলি ভাল করে ভর্ত্তি করে নিচ্ছেন। এর চেয়ে দুঃখের বিষয়, লজ্জার বিষয়, অন্যায়, অবিচার, অত্যাচার আর কি হতে পারে? আমি আবার বলছি এই চাষীদের কাছে একদিন এঁদের জবাবদিহী করতে হবে। যে চাষীর ভিতর শতকরা ৮৫ জন মুসলমান চাষী, সেই চাষীদের কাছে আজ লীগের, তথাকথিত লীগ নামধারী সুরাবর্দ্দী সমর্থনকারী মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী এবং লীগ দলভুক্ত সমর্থনকারীদের একদিন জবাবদিহী করতেই হবে। এই শতকরা ৮৫ জন মুসলমান চাষীদের কাছে—

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit resumed his seat.)

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should first like to give short replies to each of the cut motions which have been moved by the different speakers.

Mr. Morgan's cut motion is in respect of shortage of seeds and the necessity for adequate organisation for the distribution of seeds. Sir, there was a very great demand for both *aus* and *aman* seeds this year. I know that this was very largely due to the abnormal price of paddy and the distress. On account of the distress many of the agriculturists had eaten up their seeds and they wanted seeds to be supplied by Government. We knew that there was great distress and many of the agriculturists had eaten up the seeds. So, on assuming office I at once went up to Government for granting a very large amount for the purchase and distribution of *aman* seeds. Whereas last year only Rs. 9 lakhs was allotted for purchasing *aman* seeds, this year as much as Rs. 65½ lakhs was sanctioned for purchase of *aman* seeds. We have to admit that we had no proper organisation before for which we are not responsible. We had to do the best of a bad job. We had to organise as much as we could by appointing new officers and get these seeds distributed as properly as we could arrange. But, Sir, in this connection I must say that we cannot expect to supply seeds for the whole of Bengal. The area for paddy seeds alone is 26 millions of acres. 26 millions of maunds of seeds will be necessary for the whole of this area for which

the cost at even Rs. 20 per maund will be as much as Rs. 52 crores which is beyond the capacity of any Government, the total aggregate receipt of Bengal being only Rs. 18 crores or thereabout. Our policy is to supply improved seeds according to a definite plan so that the area under improved seed may gradually increase. As regards ordinary seeds, our plan is only to supply seeds where there is real shortage, that is, on account of climatic calamities or on account of diseases in crops, if there are no seeds available in particular areas, in those areas only we supply seeds. But, as a matter of fact, we found last year that we had to supply seeds in areas where seeds were available. In Eastern Bengal we purchased seeds from some districts and we had to send seeds to other parts of those very districts. There was really no dearth of seeds there but the real demand was for money for purchase of seeds. Instead of going in for agricultural loans, agriculturists preferred to ask for seeds and this was due to the fact that the system under which seeds were distributed was very favourable to them. Seeds were distributed according to the principle that they would have to return either 50 per cent. only above the quantity of seeds taken after harvesting of the crop or the cost price at which seeds were purchased at the time of distribution. The agriculturists would be very much benefited according to this system if the prices went down tremendously because he would have to pay only one and a half times of the crop he took. For example, we generally purchased this year at the rate of Rs. 25 per maund and the contract made with the agriculturists to whom we made over the seeds was that they would pay for one maund either Rs. 25 or deliver one and a half maunds of paddy. If the price goes down to Rs. 10, the agriculturist would get off by paying only Rs. 15—the price of one and a half maunds instead of Rs. 25. So, Government would be losing there, but we do not care for the loss because we wanted paddy to be grown on every land so that no land should lie fallow for want of seeds. This would be an encouragement given to the agriculturists at this time of distress so that no land should remain fallow. But our future policy will certainly be to grant seeds only where there are no seeds available because if the impression gains ground that Government would supply seeds wherever there is demand, it would be impossible for the Government to meet the demand because, I have already said, the entire demand for the whole of Bengal in that case, would be in the region of Rs. 52 crores.

As regards organisation, we are going in for definitely reorganising the whole Agricultural Department so that we may distribute the seeds and realise also under a systematic method and we may not have to manage it as unsatisfactorily after this year.

As regards Mr. Hirtzel's motion to raise a discussion about the crop statistics we fully realise that there is no reliable machinery for the collection of crop statistics in Bengal, and we are seriously considering to set up a machinery on the lines of those which are in vogue in the United Provinces and the Punjab and I think, Sir, within next three months this scheme will materialise.

As regards the motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar and several other members I shall make only a short statement. Sir, jute price is not my subject. It is directly connected with the Commerce Department so far as price is concerned, but still I shall make a short statement on the subject. We know that the Jute Association had fixed a minimum price for raw jute and as soon as we came to know of it we have been in correspondence with the Government of India, we have been in constant touch with them and we have been placing the case of the agriculturists as emphatically as we can. (Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Where is the evidence?) This evidence is in the Secretariat documents. (Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: When will relief come to the jute growers?) That we cannot say. We can say this much that we are doing our best and I can assure this House that this Ministry are as anxious as any member of this House, if not more, to see that the jute cultivators get a fair price—a price which is not only sufficient to enable them to live happily in these days of abnormal rise in the price of rice, because the cost of living has gone up very appreciably. Recently the Commerce Minister had been to Delhi and he had a long discussion with the Commerce Member of the Government of India, and he got a very sympathetic reply. It is believed that there will be further discussion in the month of January again and something will come out of it.

As regards the provision of land for the landless people I may inform the House that the pressure on land is already very heavy. There is no land to go about for settlement with the landless labourers, but still Government is doing its best and is contemplating the promulgation of an ordinance for bringing the waste land under cultivation by force. As regards the *khas mahal* land it is the policy of Government to give preference in making settlement to the landless people whose land has particularly been diluviated due to erosions of river. As regards Zamindari *khas land* Government has no control over it and the Government is seriously considering, and as a matter of fact, it is in correspondence with the Government of India for promulgating an ordinance in order to compel the zemindars either to cultivate *khas* waste land themselves or, to allow Government to get such land cultivated by settling it with the landless labourers.

As regards facilities to agriculturists to grow more food, I shall make a statement as to what we have so far done (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: All facilities have been given?) We know what facilities are to be given and in what way the "Grow More Food" campaign is to be carried on. Sir, as I have said, the only thing that was done by the previous Ministry last year was this: only Rs. 19 lakhs was provided for the distribution of seeds. Besides that, they issued certain pamphlets, and they did nothing more. What we have done is this: we have distributed 2½ lakhs maunds of *aman* seeds at a cost of Rs. 52,35,793; we have undertaken the distribution of 15,000 maunds of *aman* seeds for Midnapore at a cost of Rs. 2,50,000, 48,000 maunds of *aus* seed at a cost of Rs. 5,33,215, 50,000 maunds of wheat seed at a cost of Rs. 9,00,000 of which sanction has been received; distribution of 42,000 maunds of gram, lentil and mustard at a cost of Rs. 8,68 thousand and odd, distribution of 1 lakh maund of potato

seed at a cost of Rs. 31,57 thousand and odd of which sanction has just been received. (Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: May we know why the Assistant Secretary has been arrested?) That has no connection at all with the purchase of seeds, nothing of the kind. Purchase of seeds is done by the Director of Agriculture and nobody else. It has perhaps something to do with departments other than Agriculture. (Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: What is that thing?) (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the question be now put.) Sir, we find that if Bengal is to keep pace with the increasing population, it must go in for the cultivation of potato on an extensive scale, because by the cultivation of potato from one acre of land we get at least 10 times as much as paddy. We are going to distribute this year 1 lakh maund of potato seeds and 50,000 maunds of manure which we are getting from Bihar. We are also going to undertake the distribution of 56,400 maunds of seed for substitute crop in the flooded areas of Bengal. As regards the flood-affected area of Burdwan we have got a separate scheme drawn up and we have got sanction of Rs. 13,52,000 for the distribution of *rabi* crop seeds which are going to be distributed immediately. We have also a scheme for the distribution of 12,500 maunds of fodder seeds at a cost of Rs. 1,25,800. We have undertaken the distribution of 14,000 *tolas* of country vegetables at a cost of Rs. 3,750; irrigation by Persian wheels at a cost of Rs. 65,820; purchase and distribution of seeds of English vegetables in rural areas at a cost of Rs. 25,000, distribution of seeds of vegetables of Indian and English types for urban areas at a cost of Rs. 2,00,945, and authorisation to the Collectors to take up small irrigational projects for the extension of cultivation up to a limit of Rs. 10,000 per district, the total being Rs. 3 lakhs. The grand total aggregate 1 crore and 49 lakhs of rupees for "Grow More Food" campaign. We are going to get further grants besides those stated above. We are not sitting idle, we are doing our very best to grapple with the situation.

In conclusion I want to say that we fully realise that we are face to face with the enemy of starvation, and we are determined at any cost and at any risk to defeat our enemy, the enemy of starvation, and I hope that we will succeed. I also hope that we will get the co-operation of this House.

Mr. C. MORGAN: Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

The motion of Mr. G. Morgan that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then by leave of the House withdrawn.

Mr. M. A. F. HIRTZEL: Sir, I also beg leave of the House to withdraw my motion.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. The European Party claim that they are not with the Government and, therefore, they claim the privilege of moving the cut motions. As you are aware, Sir, cut motions are permitted to be moved by members of the Opposition. For moving cut motions the European group take the liberty of being in the Opposition but whenever a motion is pressed we find invariably they

behave as if they are members of the Government party. I submit this is only to waste the time of the House and the time of the Opposition. It is an insincere and hypocritical move on the part of a particular section to waste the time of the Opposition, which is rightfully theirs, to move cut motions and if they behave in this manner I have no other alternative but to oppose the motion for leave being granted to withdraw.

Mr. A. F. STARK: On this point I beg to submit that the only constructive proposals that have been put forward this morning have been put forward by two members of my party.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Only to be withdrawn. All insincere and hypocritical.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, you have raised no doubt a point of some importance but that is not quite relevant to the matter at issue at present. Now the point that arises for consideration is whether leave should be given to Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel to withdraw his motion. Do I take it that you seriously object to leave being granted to him?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We have to expose the hypocrisy of these people.

The motion that leave be granted to Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel to withdraw his motion was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—110.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr. (Khulna).
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, The Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Khan Sahib Maulvi Md.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F., O.B.E.
Hodge, Mr. H. R.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.

AYES—110.

Leisk, Mr. John.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, The Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, The Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiuddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, The Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Chowdhury, Mr.

NOES—75.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Deiui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahiur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

The Ayes being 110 and the Noes 75 the motion was carried.

The motion of Mr. M. A. F. Hirtzel that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The motion of Mr. Ashutosh Mullick that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar that the demand of Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar that the demand for Rs. 1,33,23,000 for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" be reduced by Rs. 100 (which was moved to raise a discussion about the failure of Government to fix economic minimum price of jute) was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—75.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.

AYES—75.

Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—114.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr. (Khulna).
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Adbul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-al-Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edibar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, The Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Khan Sahib Maulvi Md.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F., O.B.E.
Hodge, Mr. H. R.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
Mopherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, The Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hosain, The Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Pain, The Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, The Hon'ble Mr. H. S.

NOES—114.

Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.	**Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.**
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.	**Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.**
Walker, Mr. J. R.	**Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.**
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.	

The Ayes being 75 and the Noes 114, the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain that a sum of Rs. 1,33,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture", was then put and agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I call upon the next item, I should like to tell the House that we rise punctually at 12. Therefore, honourable members will have only 45 minutes at their disposal. The other 15 minutes will be taken by me for putting the motions.

37—Education—General.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,67,56,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General".

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to provide for sufficient aid to non-Government secondary schools to enable them to grant dearness allowance to their teachers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of the most remarkable, if not the outstanding, feature of the secondary education system of Bengal, from the organisational point of view, is the very little part that the Government takes in providing secondary education for the people. Sir, there are about 4,000 secondary schools in this province—1,500 high schools and about 2,500 middle schools. Now, there are only about 60 Government secondary schools in this province, i.e., out of these 4,000 schools only about 60 are Government secondary schools. That shows the very little part that the Government of this province plays in providing secondary education to our people.

Take the question again from the expenditure point of view. The expenditure on secondary schools for Indian boys runs to crores but the Government contributes only 16 per cent. of the total expenditure, 83 per cent. or so being contributed by the people. It is therefore only natural, Sir, that the Government will not think of the teachers of secondary schools in the province through whose devotion and sacrifice, through whose energy and enthusiasm, secondary education in this province has reached its present state and development. Sir, last year the Fazlul Huq Government at least did something, did make a little gesture, towards alleviating the distress of the secondary school teachers by providing an additional grant of Rs. 1,71,000 to pay certain classes of secondary school teachers,

viz., the high school teachers in Calcutta when the schools were closed here during the air-raid disturbances. But, Sir, in this budget no such provision, not even a show of it has been made to meet the present situation and to relieve the distress of the secondary school teachers due to exorbitant prices. You are aware, Sir, that the Government budget in respect of secondary schools generally provides something like Rs. 18 to Rs. 20 lakhs as direct grant to non-Government secondary schools and some 16 lakhs of rupees or so for expenditure on Government secondary schools. That shows, Sir, that while, on the one hand Government plays a very small part in the matter of secondary education in general, it plays on the other hand a very costly part so far as expenditure on Government secondary schools is concerned. They spend about Rs. 16 lakhs or so on the very small number of Government secondary schools—not exceeding 60 in all and they provide only 18 to 20 lakhs of rupees for grant to non-Government secondary schools which are as many as 4,000 less the aforesaid 60. That is the step-motherly treatment that Government accords to the non-Government secondary schools of the province. In 1942-43, i.e., last year, the expenditure of the Fazlul Huq Government towards grant to non-Government secondary schools came up to Rs. 20 lakhs, but what has been provided, Sir, in the budget for 1943-44 for that purpose? Only Rs. 18,80,000, i.e., Rs. 1,20,000 less.

Then, Sir, there is nothing in the budget to show that the Government really mind relieving the teachers. They do not think of relieving their distress in any way by providing for any fund for that purpose. Had they really any idea of granting any relief they could have utilised the cuts made in the Education budget for this purpose. Last year, Sir, an economy was made in the Education Budget—an economy to the extent of Rs. 10 lakhs. A specific amount of Rs. 10 lakhs was provided in the budget for the year 1942-43, but when the time for spending came economy was duly made. That related to Rs. 10 lakhs saved by way of curtailment of the additional grants to District School Boards in cess paying districts, because many of those boards possess large accumulated balances. Now, Sir, if Government could make an economy to the extent of Rs. 10 lakhs, Government could as well earmark this sum for the relief of secondary school teachers this year. That would have gone a great way in relieving the hard hit teachers of secondary schools at the present moment.

Now, Sir, I propose only that for the rest of the year a grant of Rs. 100 per month be made to every high school for the purpose of granting dearness allowance to its teachers and Rs. 50 to every middle school for such relief of its teachers. I think if such a grant be made for at least the next three months that would enable these teachers to keep their body and soul together. Otherwise, Sir, I am almost certain that many of these teachers will have to go without food or to be relieved through the Government scheme of tackling with the vagrants. My proposal therefore is that a scheme should be immediately framed to enable the secondary school teachers to tide over the present difficulty and, Sir, after helping them in tiding over the present difficulty, the scheme, so far as the next year is

NOES—114.

Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.	**Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.**
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.	**Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.**
Walker, Mr. J. R.	**Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.**
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.	

The Ayes being 75 and the Noes 114, the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain that a sum of Rs. 1,33,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture", was then put and agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I call upon the next item, I should like to tell the House that we rise punctually at 12. Therefore, honourable members will have only 45 minutes at their disposal. The other 15 minutes will be taken by me for putting the motions.

37—Education—General.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,67,56,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General".

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to provide for sufficient aid to non-Government secondary schools to enable them to grant dearness allowance to their teachers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of the most remarkable, if not the outstanding, feature of the secondary education system of Bengal, from the organisational point of view, is the very little part that the Government takes in providing secondary education for the people. Sir, there are about 4,000 secondary schools in this province—1,500 high schools and about 2,500 middle schools. Now, there are only about 60 Government secondary schools in this province, i.e., out of these 4,000 schools only about 60 are Government secondary schools. That shows the very little part that the Government of this province plays in providing secondary education to our people.

Take the question again from the expenditure point of view. The expenditure on secondary schools for Indian boys runs to crores but the Government contributes only 16 per cent. of the total expenditure, 83 per cent. or so being contributed by the people. It is therefore only natural, Sir, that the Government will not think of the teachers of secondary schools in the province through whose devotion and sacrifice, through whose energy and enthusiasm, secondary education in this province has reached its present state and development. Sir, last year the Fazlul Huq Government at least did something, did make a little gesture, towards alleviating the distress of the secondary school teachers by providing an additional grant of Rs. 1,71,000 to pay certain classes of secondary school teachers,

teachers are now bankrupt. Government then sanctioned an allowance of Rs. 75 to each teacher in Calcutta. In September last, the last Government paid each teacher in Calcutta Rs. 75. Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri said that they had spent Rs. 1,70,000 in that direction. But I consider that that was not adequate. While a sum of Rs. 75 was sanctioned instructions were side by side given to all the schools that that amount should be deducted from the pay of each teacher. Rs. 75 was itself a small contribution. At the same time it was deducted from their pay. The Government school teachers have their pay and they are also given a dearness allowance in addition to their pay, while these teachers are asked to pay back the Rs. 75 given to them. I understand that the Bengal Relief Committee are supplying foodstuffs at concession rates to some teachers. It is high time that Government came to the rescue of these teachers by paying a substantial amount. I do not support the motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri. He has suggested that Government and the schools should pay in the proportion of 50—50, that is to say, if a school pays 50 per cent. the Government will pay the other 50 per cent. I have already explained that all the schools have come to such a state that they are not in a position to contribute anything. Therefore it is ridiculous to suggest that the schools should pay 50 per cent. They can illafford to pay any amount. It is for the Government to come to the rescue of the teachers.

Babu RADHA NATH DAS: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. This is to raise a discussion about the lack of Government's policy to educate the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes of Bengal.

Sir, I have tabled this motion not to inform the honourable members of this House how much education is important so far as the Scheduled Caste people are concerned but only to show you and the honourable members of the House that Government have practically failed to take proper and suitable steps and measures for the advancement of education of the Scheduled Caste people. I accuse this Government—I bring this allegation against the Government—that they are practically callous and indifferent so far as Scheduled Caste education is concerned. It is natural that a question may arise why I am bringing this allegation against the Government. It will be evident from the expenditure that the Government have incurred during the last 5 or 6 years in connection with Scheduled Caste education. Sir, during the last 4 years Government spent only Rs. 4,69,000. In the year 1938-39 they set apart a handsome sum of Rs. 5 lakhs but in that very year they spent only Rs. 22,000. In the year 1939-40 they spent only Rs. 90,000. In the year 1940-41 they spent Rs. 1,70,000, and in 1941-42 Rs. 1,87,000. In the year 1942-43 they spent Rs. 1,41,000. In this year they have provided in the budget a paltry and a very insignificant sum of Rs. 1,50,000. I want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the vastness and importance of the subject matter, viz., the education of the Scheduled Caste people, their population being practically 1/5th of the total population of Bengal, and their number being 1,20,00,000, but in spite of that, only a paltry sum of Rs. 6,10,000 has

NOES—114.

Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.	**Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.**
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.	**Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.**
Walker, Mr. J. R.	**Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.**
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.	

The Ayes being 75 and the Noes 114, the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain that a sum of Rs. 1,33,23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture", was then put and agreed to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I call upon the next item, I should like to tell the House that we rise punctually at 12. Therefore, honourable members will have only 45 minutes at their disposal. The other 15 minutes will be taken by me for putting the motions.

37—Education—General.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,67,56,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General".

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, I beg to move that the demand for Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to provide for sufficient aid to non-Government secondary schools to enable them to grant dearness allowance to their teachers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, one of the most remarkable, if not the outstanding, feature of the secondary education system of Bengal, from the organisational point of view, is the very little part that the Government takes in providing secondary education for the people. Sir, there are about 4,000 secondary schools in this province—1,500 high schools and about 2,500 middle schools. Now, there are only about 60 Government secondary schools in this province, i.e., out of these 4,000 schools only about 60 are Government secondary schools. That shows the very little part that the Government of this province plays in providing secondary education to our people.

Take the question again from the expenditure point of view. The expenditure on secondary schools for Indian boys runs to crores but the Government contributes only 16 per cent. of the total expenditure, 83 per cent. or so being contributed by the people. It is therefore only natural, Sir, that the Government will not think of the teachers of secondary schools in the province through whose devotion and sacrifice, through whose energy and enthusiasm, secondary education in this province has reached its present state and development. Sir, last year the Fazlul Huq Government at least did something, did make a little gesture, towards alleviating the distress of the secondary school teachers by providing an additional grant of Rs. 1,71,000 to pay certain classes of secondary school teachers,

Maulvi IDRIS AHMED MIA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of the motion is to raise a discussion about the failure to introduce Primary Education Act in Malda which is most backward educationally in Bengal.

মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমি আমার ১৫নং cut motion উত্থাপন প্রসঙ্গে বলতে চাই যে, বাংলাদেশের মধ্যে আমাদের মালদহ জেলা শিক্ষা বিষয়ে অত্যন্ত পশ্চাৎপদ। কয়েক বৎসর আগে আমি যে প্রশ্ন করেছিলাম, তার উত্তরে মাননীয় শিক্ষা-মন্ত্রী মহোদয় জানিয়েছিলেন যে বাংলাদেশের মধ্যে মালদহ জেলা শিক্ষা বিষয়ে সবচেয়ে নিম্ন। মাত্র ৩·৮ পার সেণ্ট সেখানকার লোক কিছু লেখাপড়া জানে বললেই হয়। অবশ্য এটা পুরাতন হিসাবে, নূতন হিসাবে হয়তো কিছু বেড়ে থাকতে পারে। কিন্তু, যদি মালদহ জেলায় কিছু বেড়েই থাকে, তেমনি অন্য জেলায়তো কিছু বেড়েছে? কারণ অন্য জেলার লোক কি কচ্ছপের মতন বসে আছে, আর percentage বেড়ে গিয়েছে? তা মনে করবার কোন কারণ আছে বলে আমার মনে হয় না। যাই হোক, নূতন হিসাবে সেটা কত, তা মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের কাছে আমরা জানতে পারবো। এখন কথা হ'ল এই যে, এই জেলায় বহু আগেই আমাদের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষা প্রবর্ত্তনের ব্যবস্থা করা উচিত ছিল। আমরা বহু আন্দোলন করেছি, বহু চেষ্টা করেছি, ডিষ্ট্রীক্ট বোর্ড থেকে আমরা resolution পাশ করেছি, এবং আমাদের যা শিক্ষা বাবদে কর দিতে লাগে তাও আমরা মালদায় দিতে প্রস্তুত আছি। এতো করা সত্ত্বেও এবং বহু রকম চেষ্টা করা সত্ত্বেও আজ পর্য্যন্ত গভর্ণমেণ্ট সেখানে Primary Educationকে enforce করেন নি, এটা বড়ই দুঃখের কথা, এটা প্রত্যেক লোকেই জানেন। এমন কি, Inspector of Colleges আমাদের এই Primary Education সম্বন্ধে বছরের পর বছর যে কথা বলেছেন সেটা আমি বলতে চাই। তিনি বলেছেন: "This district is educationally backward and the percentage of literacy is 3·8, showing that primary education is lacking among the masses. There is no strong movement for making primary education compulsory. There is need for introducing compulsory primary education in the district as a part of the Government programme." আমি আপনাদের বলতে চাই, তিনি যে কথাটি stress দিয়ে বলেছেন "Part of the Government programme" কিন্তু সেটি নিশ্চয়ই কোথাও নেই। জোর করে যে যার জেলায় যত রকমভাবে নিয়ে যেতে পারে, majorityভাবে বা মন্ত্রীদের থেকে এই রকমভাবে বিচার আমাদের এখানে হয়ে থাকে। শুধু তাই নয়, এই মালদহ জেলায় Government থেকে একটি মাত্র Training School আছে এবং তাতে ২৪-২৫টি করে মাত্র ছেলে কোন রকমে পাশ করে। কয়েক বছর ধরে চেষ্টা করে সেখানে আর একটা স্কুল গড়ে তোলা হয়েছিল এবং গভর্ণমেণ্ট প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছিলেন যে তাঁরা grant-in-aid দিবেন বলে, কিন্তু ১৯৩৯ থেকে আজ পর্য্যন্ত এই কয় বছরের মধ্যে গভর্ণমেণ্ট মাত্র একটী stipend দিয়েছেন; এছাড়া maintenance cost বা অন্য কিছুই দেন নি। গভর্ণমেণ্টের স্কুলে এক বছরে ২৩টি ছাত্রের মধ্যে মাত্র ১৮টি পাশ করেছে। এই ১৮টি ছেলেকে পাশ করাতে গিয়ে গভর্ণমেণ্টের প্রায় পাঁচ ছয় হাজার টাকা খরচ হয়, আর আমাদের স্কুলে সামান্য পাঁচশো টাকাও দেননি। গত বছর Director of Public Instruction পর্য্যন্ত aid দিতে রাজী হয়েছিলেন এবং একটা maintenance stipend ছাত্রদের দিতে চেয়েছিলেন, কিন্তু সেই Finance Departmentএর এক কর্ত্তা সাহেব সম্মুখে

আমি দেখছি, মিঃ সুশীল কুমার মুখার্জী, তিনি একটা note দিলেন যে, এই টাকা দেওয়া যেতে পারে কি না বলে। তারপরে grant-in-aid এবং Directorএর সমস্ত কথা ভেসে গেলো জলে। Director of Public Instructionএর মতে, যদি একটা grant-in-aid দেওয়া হয় তাহলে খুব ভাল হয়। তার উপরে ব্যক্তিগত কোন grudge বা বিদ্বেষ থাকলে এই রকম হয় যেটা বর্ত্তমানে দেখা যায়। আর কথা হচ্ছে এই যে গভর্ণমেণ্টের দিক থেকে যতগুলি প্রতিষ্ঠান রয়েছে তাদের সেখানে gratuity allowance, training allowance প্রভৃতি অনেক রকম, কত কি যে আছে, তার আর শেষ নেই কো। এখন কথা হলো এই, মাননীয় শিক্ষা-মন্ত্রী মহোদয় যখন কৃষী-মন্ত্রী ছিলেন তখন মালদহে একটা Mango exhibition খোলবার জন্য গিয়েছিলেন; এখন আমি তাঁকে অনুরোধ করি, তিনি আর একটা exhibition যেন করেন for the failure of Government educational activities in the Malda district এবং এটা যদি করেন তাহলে আমার মনে হয় খুব ভাল হয়। তিনি যখন মালদহে যান, তখন আমরা কি করলাম, আমাদের আমসত্ত্ব দিয়ে তাঁকে বিদায় করেছিলাম। আশা করি, তিনি আর একবার সেখানে যাবেন এবং স্বচক্ষে দেখে আসবেন এই North Bengal districtএ Matriculateএর সংখ্যা কত কম। মালদহ জেলার প্রতি গভর্ণমেণ্টের কোন educational activitiesএর দিকে দৃষ্টি নেই কেন? আশা করি শিক্ষা-মন্ত্রী মহোদয় এই মালদহ জেলার প্রতি একটু দয়া করে দৃষ্টি দিবেন এবং অন্ততঃ একটু ফেনের মতন করেও কিছু দিবেন, যাতে দুর্ভিক্ষ-পীড়িত, mentally ও physically, মালদহের লোকেরা খেয়ে বাঁচতে পারে।

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, time will not permit me to deal with the bigger questions of policy in respect of the Education Department. I desire to confine myself to the immediate need for giving help to the teachers in non-Government institutions of the province, and when I say non-Government institutions I include in that category non-Government colleges, secondary schools, middle English schools, primary schools, tols and madrassahs. The reports which are coming to us as regards the economic distress of the teachers belonging to all these categories are indeed of an alarming character. There is not the least doubt that unless immediate arrangements are made to save them, they themselves will go into oblivion as individuals and with them will also go into oblivion the entire educational system of the province.

Now, Sir, the Minister of Education will bear with me that last year in October, 1942, arrangements were made to give some temporary help to the teachers in non-Government colleges and schools. That principle was accepted by the then Cabinet. There is a precedent for the present Education Minister to move the Finance Department and also his colleagues and secure for these suffering educational institutions a temporary help to tide over the difficulties during the next three months. What I would suggest for the consideration of the Government is that there should be a lump grant, not based on the salary but lump grant paid to each teacher belonging to all these institutions, who come from suffering middle class families, Hindus and Muslims, of the province and give them Rs. 100 or Rs. 150 per head during this period. It may amount to a few lakhs of rupees—it may amount to 10 or 15 lakhs of rupees, but when we are dealing

with a budget with a deficit of 5 to 7 crores of rupees it does not matter if you add 10 or 15 lakhs of rupees for saving people who have rendered such unique services to the province. In other provinces grants made to educational institutions are much higher than grants which have possibly been made in Bengal.

Sir, my last request is in respect of the students. I was glad to find that the Education Department has drawn up a scheme to grant some temporary sholarships to suffering students in different educational institutions, but that covers only a limited number of students. I specially plead for the students who are living in hostels and messes. Only two days ago I had frantic appeals coming from several hostels in the city pointing out—although Mr. Amery has said that rice is selling at Rs. 25 per maund—that students are starving and unless arrangements were made to save the students the situation would be desperate. I would ask the Education Minister to state before the House what arrangements have been made to supply foodgrains to the students of the province, at any rate, to those who are living away from their families to keep them going on during the next few months. (Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Why do you omit students residing in rural areas?) I am not going to do that. If Government can arrange for a scheme which will bring food to students who are residing with their parents, we shall certainly have no objection; but at any rate there should be an immediate scheme for supply of foodgrains to those students who are living away from their parents in hostels and messes not in Calcutta alone but in every part of the province. I had a letter from the Minister of Civil Supplies a fortnight ago. He said: "Although nothing has yet been done for the sake of students, my scheme for giving supply of foodgrains to the students is complete and within the next week you will see how it works." Now, where is that scheme? If students could be fed on paper through statements and communiques they would have been overfed now. But up till now nothing has been done and nothing, it seems, is going to be done.

Sir, these are the two concrete proposals I am making, and I think these proposals will have the support of all sections of the House and something tangible will be done before the schools and colleges close for the Puja Vacation.

Mr. W. C. WORDSWORTH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself entirely with the point of view that has been put forward in this House now and frequently in many other places of late, but I do not identify myself with any specific complaint against this Government for the fault has been the fault of every Government of every kind we have ever had in Bengal and for generation after generation of the public ever since education was introduced in this country——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That was why you refused to support teachers when they approached you.

Mr. W. C. WORDSWORTH: The position of teachers has never been fairly considered. It is considered in a somewhat vague way that because they are doing very valuable public work it would be improper to consider awarding them according to any recognised economic standard. In fact the economic argument is carefully left out, especially because every one knows that whatever their economic position they will continue to do their work because they themselves have pride in their work. I have been privileged previously in this House to pay my small tribute to the way in which the teachers of Calcutta and generally the teachers of Bengal have borne themselves in the troubles through which they have passed and are passing and I should like to associate myself with the appeal to Government that if Government can find any money to help teachers in Calcutta and out of Calcutta, every sort of teacher in every kind of school, that Government should do it. With this I should associate a further appeal. Is it not possible for parents who are comfortably off to do something to help teachers? They get their children educated for very little. Teachers give very great service for very small reward and at a hasty guess I may say that a boy in a high school who gets about 120 hours of school teaching in a month pays for it, or his father pays for it at a typical rate of about 4 pies an hour. For that he gets the use of the school, the staff, the school furniture and the professional service of many teachers. Is it not possible for a large number of parents to make it 5 pies an hour for the next few months and to hand over the extra money not to Government but to some association, some committee, relief committee for teachers that they may set up themselves, get this money among themselves and then divide it amongst teachers as they please?

I am thinking not only of Calcutta but if my argument suggests that I am, that is only because it is more convenient to concentrate the arguments on one place. But we know that teachers all over Bengal are suffering greatly and that at a time like this they cannot perform their obligations as citizens, as fathers, as husbands. If, therefore, we can do anything by our opinion in this House and outside it to help teachers we shall, I think, be doing a great service to Bengal not only at this terrible juncture but a service which will have lasting effects. And finally may I observe that if such a committee for helping teachers and taking an interest in the welfare of education comes into existence in Calcutta and in other places we may have the beginning of an organisation that sooner or later may evolve into the Education Board for the control of schools that many of us have been anxious to see.

I have pleasure in adding my word to what has been said by Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee and many others at many times.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I yield to none in appreciating the pitiable condition of the teachers of secondary schools in Bengal—not only of the teachers of secondary schools but also of the teachers of the primary schools who are very poorly paid. Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri in moving his motion has said that the present

Ministry has not provided even that money in the budget for giving some extra aid to teachers as did the last Fazlul Huq Government, but my friend and, I think, many others like him forget that the present budget is practically the budget of the late Fazlul Huq Government.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Not that budget. It is the revised budget.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Yes, but practically the same.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Practically! Take shelter under the word "practically".

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: It will be seen that the late Fazlul Huq Ministry also could not provide that extra money in the budget that they presented in the last winter session.

Sir, it is an undeniable fact that Bengal owes a great debt of gratitude to the teachers. As soon as this Government assumed office I found that the situation was very serious. I was flooded with applications from distressed teachers and to show the appreciation of the situation by this Government I would like to point out to the House that I at once prepared a more or less comprehensive scheme for giving relief to all and sundry. So far as secondary school teachers and secondary schools are concerned our scheme included an item of Rs. 40 lakhs for giving some aid to them. There were other items also for giving aid in this emergency to various other institutions and teachers. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Why the past tense.) Sir, I went up to the Government as a whole with this scheme and when I went there I had a great hope that something would be done to help these tottering institutions and these starving teachers. But it was found that it was not possible to do anything for these deserving people. I think it will be admitted that to save the general mass of people from starvation is a very important consideration and it cannot be denied that that is a far more important consideration than even the important consideration of helping the distressed teachers. Therefore, whatever money was available it was decided that that must be spent towards the general relief of the starving people of Bengal. Sir, the Government as a whole could not accept my scheme but only a part of it was accepted which was this: that those of the primary school teachers who are in schools managed by District School Boards should be given a dearness allowance of Rs. 8 per month for three months. It was also decided that students should be given some help as has been referred to by Dr. Mookerjee at the rate of Rs. 8 for three months.

So far as giving relief to others are concerned, particularly to teachers, the Cabinet took this view that it was impossible for the Government under the present circumstances to provide money for this. At that time the Government was contemplating to fix the maximum price of rice and Government expected that prices would go down very soon, and that if the Government scheme succeeded that would give relief not only to

teachers but also to all classes of people. Sir, we have given help at the rate of Rs. 8 to primary teachers. That is insignificant, it must be admitted. At that time rice was selling at the rate of Rs. 40. Government expected that if the price of rice could be reduced to Rs. 20 in the course of a short time, in that case if a family required say, two maunds of rice per month that family would get a relief of Rs. 40 per month. Therefore, that was considered the best way of giving relief, and I should say that in spite of the difficulties of the situation it cannot be denied that the position has improved to a very great extent and in many places the teachers along with all others are getting rice at a much lower rate at the present time. I can cite the case of the town of Faridpur. On the initiative of the District Officer there rationing has been introduced in the town and everyone including school teachers is getting rice at the controlled price from Government shops. I hope that in the course of a short time that will be possible in other places also.

As regards special treatment of Scheduled Caste education, I think no one will deny that not only this Government but the various Governments since the beginning of the present Reforms have been trying their best to give special encouragement to Scheduled Caste education. My honourable friend Mr. Radha Nath Das has said that this year a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 has been provided for Scheduled Caste education. That is going to be a permanent feature of our grant. That sum will be granted every year and it is in our contemplation to augment that fund, so that the Scheduled Caste education fund may rise up to Rs. 5 lakhs subject to this proviso that there must be suitable schemes for spending that money. I invite the committee that has been formed for Scheduled Caste education to look into the matter. If it can succeed in giving a suitable and proper scheme, every attempt will be made to raise the grant up to Rs. 5 lakhs. They should put their heads together and I hope that something will be done in this respect.

As regards Mr. Idris Ahmed's motion, his complaint is that the Primary Education Act was not introduced in the district of Malda. It was in April, 1942, that the Ministry which was then functioning decided that the district of Malda would not be included in the Primary Education scheme and not only in that district but in two other districts, the scheme had to be deferred until better times come. During the last budget session Mr. Idris Ahmed was a member of the House but he did not raise his voice of protest against the decision of the then Government because he was then supporting the Government. I do not accuse the past Government that they made an improper decision. The difficulty was that the times were very uncertain and the imposition of a cess was not considered proper by the then Government. It should be seen that in introducing cess in a particular district this fact has to be taken into consideration that the proceeds from the cess never suffices for the expenditure on primary education in that district and Government has to supplement the proceeds of the tax very substantially. Under the circumstances then prevailing and even in the circumstances now prevailing, it is very difficult for Government to allot additional money for primary education. That is why the scheme was not introduced in

Malda. I would like to inform the House that a Special Officer is investigating the entire question of primary education in the province and it is expected that he will give his report in the course of the current financial year. As soon as this report is received, it will be given due consideration by Government and I think a satisfactory decision will be arrived at so far as this question is concerned.

I think, Sir, that I have dealt with the various points that have been raised.

As regards the question of supply of foodstuffs raised by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee it has not yet been possible by the Civil Supplies Department to supply foodstuffs at controlled rates to the various hostels. I as the Education Minister shall be very happy if that can be done. Government have not been able to do anything for many other deserving people. The chaukidars in regard to whom Government is said to feel great concern have also not got any dearness allowance and are not getting any special concession on account of the fact that Government is not in a position to do anything for them. If it is at all found possible to do something particularly for these students by way of supplying them cheap rice I shall be very happy to do so.

With these words, Sir, I oppose the cut motions.

The motion of Maulvi Idris Ahmed Mia that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: At this stage may I make it clear that we do not like as members of an organised party a division to be called by any individual member of a party unless the Leader or Whip of the party concerned asks for it. This may kindly be noted by the Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: That would be the proper course. In fact when the last division was called, if my attention had been drawn to it, I would not have allowed that division.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: An individual member would then according to your ruling, Sir, be debarred from his right to call for a division. This terrible incubus of parties would deprive an individual member of his right. I doubt whether parliamentary practice will allow this right being denied to any individual member.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not sure of parliamentary practice elsewhere but I was told that that was the practice followed in this House. The practice is that the Whip generally calls a division. When he calls a division the Leader of the party concerned may intervene and say that no division is needed. That was my information and that is why I made this remark at the earliest possible opportunity, but I will look into the matter.

The motion of Mr. Radhanath Das that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. P. Banerji that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri that the demand of Rs. 1,67,56,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—73.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Chouduhry, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sanker.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur, A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—110.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr. (Khulna).
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.

Barma, The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Goswami, The Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Khan Sahib Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F., O.B.E.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, The Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, The Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsai Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Suhrawardy, The Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zillur Rahman Shah Chowdhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 73 and the Noes 110 the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan that a sum of Rs. 1,67,56,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education —General" was then put and agreed to.

41—Veterinary.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 7,80,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "41—Veterinary".

The motion was put and agreed to.

5—Salt.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 10,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Salt".

The motion was put and agreed to.

10—Forest.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 19,62,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "10—Forest".

The motion was put and agreed to.

Deposits and Advances.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 16,18,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Interest Free Advances".

The motion was put and agreed to.

11—Registration.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 20,93,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "11—Registration".

The motion was put and agreed to.

8—Provincial Excise.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 24,59,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "8—Provincial Excise".

The motion was put and agreed to.

55—Superannuation allowances and pensions, 55A—Commutations of pensions financed from ordinary revenues, and 83—Payment of commuted value of pensions not charged to revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 83,85,600 be granted for expenditure under the heads "55—Superannuation allowances and pensions", "55A—Commutation of pensions financed from ordinary revenues" and "83—Payment of commuted value of pensions not charged to revenue".

The motion was put and agreed to.

56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 26,15,700 be granted for expenditure under the head "56—Stationery and Printing and Depreciation Reserve Fund—Government Presses".

The motion was put and agreed to.

37—Education—Anglo-Indian and European.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 11,27,800 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—Anglo-Indian and European".

The motion was put and agreed to.

13—Other Taxes and Duties.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKHERJEA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,86,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "13—Other Taxes and Duties".

The motion was put and agreed to.

9—Stamps.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKHERJEA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 6,53,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps".

The motion was put and agreed to.

30—Ports and Pilotage.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,15,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage".

The motion was put and agreed to.

47—Miscellaneous Departments.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,40,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "47—Miscellaneous Departments".

The motion was put and agreed to.

36—Scientific Departments.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 30,500 be granted for expenditure under the head "36—Scientific Departments".

The motion was put and agreed to.

22—Interest on Debt and Other Obligations.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 5,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "22—Interest on Debt and Other Obligations".

The motion was put and agreed to.

57—Miscellaneous.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 31,53,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "57—Miscellaneous".

The motion was put and agreed to.

Loans and Advances.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,73,63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Loans and Advances bearing interest".

The motion was put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 12-15 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Monday, the 27th September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 27th September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI), in the Chair, 13 Hon'ble Ministers and 207 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Improvement of sanitary conditions in the Press.

*68. **Mr. P. BANERJEE:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department aware of the expert opinion that lead-poisoning cases crop up from bad sanitation in the press?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps he is proposing to take for improving the sanitary conditions in the press?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing for the years 1939-40 to 1941-42 up to August, 1943—

(*i*) the number of presses that were inspected by the Inspector of Factories;

(*ii*) the number of cases in which the proprietors were prosecuted for the violation of the Factories Rules and Payment of Wages Act;

(*iii*) the number of cases in which these prosecutions were launched upon—

(1) for violation of the Sanitary Rules of the Factories Act, and

(2) with what results;

(*iv*) the number of lead-poisoning cases in which compensations were paid;

(*v*) the number of cases that were filed up to date at the Workmen's Compensation Court;

(*vi*) the number of cases that were examined by the Certifying Surgeon;

(*vii*) the number of cases that were found out or suspected to be the lead-poisoning cases by them; and

(*viii*) the number of lead-poisoning cases that were reported to the higher authorities by the Certifying Surgeon?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) (*vii*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

(*e*) If the answer to (*c*) (*vii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the names of the—

(*i*) victims; and

(*ii*) presses,

where the lead-poisoning cases took place?

(*f*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Certifying Surgeon visited the—

(*i*) Bengal Government Press;

(*ii*) Government of India Press;

(*iii*) Government of India Form Press;

(*iv*) Calcutta Corporation Press;

(*v*) Calcutta University Press; and

(*vi*) The East Indian Railway Press

in the years 1940, 1941, 1942 and 1943?

(*g*) If the answer to (*f*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

Mr. SYED ABDUL MAJID: (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. K. Shahabuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Steps have already been taken by provisions in the Factories Act and Bengal Factories Rules.

(*c*)	1939.	1940.	1941.	1942.	Up to August, 1943.
(*i*) ..	105	83	65	63	43
(*ii*) Factories Act—	4	2	1	Nil	Nil.
Payment of Wages Act—	3	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil.
(*iii*) (1) ..	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil.
(2) Does not arise.					
(*iv*) ..	1	1	5	3	Nil.
(*v*) ..	3	2	5	7	7
(*vi*) ..	1,014	1,156	559	1,094	554
(*vii*) ..	35	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil.

(*viii*) Please refer to (*vi*) and (*vii*) above. All the cases were reported to Government.

(*d*) Does not arise.

(*e*) (*i*) Not available.

(*ii*) Bengal Government Press.

(*f*)	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.
(*i*)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(*ii*)	No	No	No	No
(*iii*)	No	No	No	No
(*iv*)	No	No	No	Yes
(*v*)	No	No	No	No
(*vi*)	No	No	No	No

(*g*) Does not arise.

Family allowance of Babu Jagabandhu Saha Roy of Mymensingh.

*69. **Mr. MONOMOHAN DAS:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) Babu Jagabandhu Saha Roy, son of Sj. Adhar Chandra Saha Roy, of Binnagaon, police-station Kishoreganj, district Mymensingh, is a political prisoner in Mymensingh Jail;

(*ii*) Rs. 20 was granted to him as his family allowance; and

(*iii*) the allowance has now been stopped?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that his old parents depended largely upon his income?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the desirability of restoring the allowance previously granted?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) Yes.

(*iii*) No.

(*b*) His parents depended partly upon his income, as he has another earning brother.

(*c*) His family allowance has been increased from Rs.20 per month to Rs.30 per month and the orders are under issue.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*) (*iii*), will Government be pleased to state whether the allowance was withheld for any duration?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: This allowance was not withheld, but after the financial allotment in 1943, the money did not reach the District Magistrate and there was some delay in payment of the allowance for the months of March and April.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: May I know for what period?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: For these two months. As soon as the allotment was received by the District Magistrate, the allowance was paid.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: গভর্ণমেণ্ট কি অনুগ্রহ করে বলবেন যে, একটা declarationএর মত হয়েছিল, যে পূর্ব্বেকার allowance double করা হবে তা সেই double না করে ৩০৲ টাকা হলো কেন?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want to explain the position. In accordance with the policy of Government, the family allowances granted to security prisoners in 1942 have been doubled subject to the proviso that

in cases where the earning of a security prisoner was not double the amount which would be paid according to the liberal policy of the Government, that maximum of cent. per cent. increase has not been granted.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Government কি অনুগ্রহ করে বলবেন কি ৩০৲ টাকা মণ চাল পাওয়া যেতে পারে ?

Mr. SPEAKER: I don't allow that.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, আমার বলবার বিষয় হলো এই যে ৩০৲ টাকাতে কত চাল পাওয়া যায়।

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry, I cannot allow you to make a statement. If you have got a supplementary question, you may put it.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Government কি অনুগ্রহ করে বলবেন যে, যে allowance এই prisonersদের দেওয়া হয় সেটা টাকার হিসাবে দেওয়া হয় না, পরিবারকে রক্ষা-করার জন্য দেওয়া হয় ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is meant for maintenance of the family but his earning before his detention was not more than Rs. 30 per month.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many dependant members are there in his family?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Is Government aware that Rs. 30 in previous years will be equivalent to Rs. 80 this year?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to the answer just given do I understand the Hon'ble Minister to say that a security prisoner is granted allowance equal to the amount which he earned at the time of his arrest?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Not only that but Government do not propose to give an allowance more than what he used to earn prior to his detention.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was his earning before his detention?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already said Rs. 30 per month.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Are we to understand that Government is sticking to the previous earning of the member before his detention without regard to the rise in prices at the present time?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already explained the position. The position is that Government have doubled the allowance to security prisoners with the proviso that if the earning of a security prisoner before his detention was not more than double the amount, then that is the maximum which is fixed. I mean to say that if his earning was Rs. 30 per month and if Government had sanctioned Rs. 20 per month, then according to the liberal policy of this Ministry, the amount would have been Rs. 40, but because he was not earning more than Rs. 30 per month, therefore, Government instead of doubling it may give only Rs. 30.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: That is the liberal policy!

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Salaries of Staff Officers in different A.R.P. areas.

33. Mr. ABUL HASHIM: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Defence) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether any uniform standard has been maintained in fixing the salaries of the Staff Officers of the different A.R.P. Services in the different A.R.P. areas;

(*ii*) whether the Government of India, by its circular letter No. 78/208/41 A.R.P., dated the 30th July, 1941, of its Home Department (A.R.P.) had fixed the salary of all Staff Officers in A.R.P. Services at Rs.150 to Rs.200 per mensem depending on the extent of the responsibilities of the Staff Officers;

(*iii*) whether it is a fact that—

(1) the Staff Officers of many A.R.P. areas with equal and identical duties and responsibilities are being paid a much less salary than the minimum fixed by the Government of India; and

(2) in some areas they are being paid within the scale laid down by the Government of India;

(*iv*) the rates of pay sanctioned for the Staff Officers of the different A.R.P. Services in the different A.R.P. areas in Bengal showing the strength of the services under each Staff Officer in each A.R.P. area;

(*v*) whether it is a fact that in the Casualty Services in the different A.R.P. areas in Bengal a standard has been maintained in fixing the salaries of the Staff Officers of the Casualty Services in conformity with the scale laid down by the Government of India;

(*vi*) whether it is a fact that the Staff Officers of the Wardens' Services and the House Protection Fire Parties in Asansol with the same strength of the above services and with equal and identical responsibilities and in some other A.R.P. areas with less party strength and less responsibilities are getting much higher pays than the Staff Officers of the above two services in Burdwan A.R.P. areas;

(*vii*) whether it is a fact that the Staff Officers of the Casualty Services at Asansol and Burdwan with identical responsibilities are getting the same pay within the scale laid down by the Government of India; and

(*viii*) whether it is a fact that the Staff Officers of the Casualty Services at Burdwan are getting a much higher pay than the Staff Officers of the Wardens' Service and the House Protection Fire Parties?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the desirability of setting up a uniform standard of salaries of the Staff Officers in the different A.R.P. areas in conformity with the scale laid down by the Government of India?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME (DEFENCE) DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) No. Salaries have been fixed taking into account the circumstances ruling in the various areas.

(*ii*) There was no fixation, only an indication of what might be paid should Provinces think necessary.

(*iii*) (1) Certain Staff Officers are being paid less than the pay indicated as permissible.

(2) Yes.

(*iv*) A statement is laid on the Table.

(*v*) Yes.

(*vi*) The Staff Officers in Asansol and in some other areas are getting higher pay than the Staff Officers in Burdwan but their responsibilities are greater.

(*vii*) Their pay is the same.

(*viii*) Yes.

(*b*) No.

Statement referred to in clause (a) (iv) of unstarred question No. 33.

STATEMENT SHOWING THE MONTHLY PAY OF STAFF OFFICERS OF VARIOUS A.R.P. SERVICES IN DIFFERENT A.R.P. AREAS AND ALSO THE AVERAGE STRENGTH OF PERSONNEL UNDER EACH STAFF OFFICER.

	Wardens Service.			House Protection Fire Parties/Street Fire Parties Service.			Casualty Service.			Rescue Service.		
	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.
1. Calcutta ..	200	27	605	150	28	592	250 for M.B. 200 for others not being L.M.F.	6	710	200	4	357
2. Howrah ..	150	12	363	150	6	560	150	3	216	150	2	371
3. 24-Parganas	150	16	325	150	9	675	200	4	311	150	1	630
4. Hooghly ..	125—200	9	252	150	4	547	150	1	367	150	1	292
5. Asansol ..	175	1	384	175	1	384	150	1	108	..	..	..
6. Barakar ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
7. Burdwan	100	1	376	100	1	376	150	1	61	..	..	..
8. Ondal ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
9. Raniganj	100	1	184	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
10. Kharagpur	125	1	344	125	1	344	175	1	75	75—125	1	45

	Wardens Service.			House Protection Fire Parties/Street Fire Parties Service.			Casualty Service.			Rescue Service.		
	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.	Pay of Staff Officer.	Number of Staff Officers.	Average strength of personnel under each Staff Officer.
11. Midnapore ..	100	1	333	125	1	333	..	..	..	75	1	45
12. Jessore ..	75	1	147	75	1	147	..	..	..	..	..	..
13. Khulna ..	..	..	..	60	1	240	..	..	..	..	..	..
14. Ranaghat ..	..	.	..	..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..
15. Dacca ..	125	3	624	125	3	624	175	2	133	125	1	237
16. Cox's Bazar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
17. Narayanganj	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	75	1	65
18. Darjeeling ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
19. Mymensingh	100	1	408	125	1	408	..	..	..	75	1	56
20. Saidpur ..	..	..	..	50	1	112	..	..	..	..	..	..
21. Barisal ..	60	1	490	60	1	490	..	..	..	75	1	67
22. Feni ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
23. Chittagong ..	165	1	664	150	1	664	165	1	117	..	..	..
24. Noakhali ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
25. Comilla ..	100	1	366	100	1	366	175	1	71	75	1	56
26. Chandpur ..	75	1	320	75	1	320	..	..	..	..	..	..

Family allowance for security prisoner Babu Shyamananda Sen.

34. Mr. JNANENDRA CHANDRA MAJUMDAR: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether security prisoner Babu Shyamananda Sen, at present detained in the Buxa Special Reserve Jail, has sent several petitions to the Government praying for the grant of family allowance for his deceased younger brother's wife and her infant child;

(*ii*) whether Shyamananda Babu has no other male or female relation who can look after and maintain his abovementioned widowed sister-in-law and her child;

(*iii*) whether Shyamananda Babu used to help his younger brother and his family from his earnings;

(*iv*) whether Shyamananda Babu's detention and subsequent death of his brother have made the condition of his brother's widow and child helpless; and

(*v*) whether they are on the verge of starvation?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of granting him family allowance?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME (JAILS) DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) It is said that the widowed sister-in-law is now in her father's place who looks after her.

(*iii*) to (*v*) No.

(*b*) and (*c*) Do not arise.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*) (*ii*), is Government aware that the widowed sister-in-law of the petitioner-prisoner is in her father's place because of privations in the prisoner's house?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government is not aware. Government is aware that the widowed sister-in-law is in her father's place.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will Government consider the desirability of enquiring as to what is the truth?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Truth about what?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Reasons for her stay in her father's place.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government will enquire.

Steamer service between Charabari and Serajganj Ghat stations.

35. Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department aware that—

(*i*) the ferry steamer which plied so long between Charabari steamer station in Tangail and Serajganj Ghat station, has been stopped since the 18th June, 1943;

(*ii*) this has caused inconvenience to the passengers;

(*iii*) the Porabari steamer station lies at a great distance from Charabari;

(*iv*) the steamer becomes overloaded at Porabari; and

(*v*) a large number of passengers are detained almost on every occasion at Charabari?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action the Government propose to take in the matter?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMERCE, LABOUR and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. K. Shahabuddin): (*a*) (*i*) The steamer service was stopped from the 19th June, 1943, and not from the 18th June, 1943.

(*ii*) to (*v*) Yes.

(*b*) No action is necessary as the steamer service was reopened by the steamer company on the 4th August, 1943, and it is running regularly at present. The service was stopped for about a month and a half because the vessel employed on it had to be sent to the workshop for annual survey and repairs and the company could not provide a relief steamer as many of their vessels had been requisitioned for military purposes.

Substitution of the name of Subdivisional Officer of Bhola in place of the Subdivisional Officer of Pirojpur in the speech of Srijut Narendra Nath Das Gupta.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Sir, during my last budget speech on Civil Supplies while speaking about Bhola I inadvertently said that the Subdivisional Officer of Pirojpur issued 14 ration cards amongst his menials. It was not the Subdivisional Officer of Pirojpur, but the Subdivisional Officer of Bhola. I request the press through you to publish this so that justice may be done to the Subdivisional Officer of Pirojpur.

SPECIAL MOTION.

On Food Debate.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir আজকের কাজ আরম্ভ হওয়ার আগে আমি আপনার throughতে Home Ministerকে categorically তিনটা প্রশ্ন করতে চাই food সম্বন্ধে।

Mr. SPEAKER: The debate is on food. You can speak on food and you may have reply from the Minister if you put a question like that.

Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the subject introduced by the three resolutions is not only an urgent one but it is a very serious one so far as this unfortunate province of Bengal is now concerned. It has been rightly observed by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister while presenting the Budget Estimates for the current year that the one problem that matters today in Bengal is the "Food Problem". There is no denying the fact that everyone in this unfortunate province is affected—from the highest to the lowest, from the richest to the poorest, from the educated to the illiterate. If there is any difference in the various groups or classes of persons, it is only in the degree; but the difficulty is felt by everyone in some form or other. The situation is difficult and the times are very hard. All the factors taken together leave no room for doubt that an action on a determined basis is urgently called for. There is hardly any room now to raise any acrimonious discussion over an unfortunate situation and to spite one another only for political purposes without any the least desire to solve the real difficulty.

On the present occasion 6 resolutions have been tabled, 4 of them are couched in the same language. One of these has been moved. This along with the two others which have also been moved raise practically the same question, namely,—that the Ministry have failed to tackle this difficult problem with which the province is faced. A subject like this was also discussed at the last session of the Assembly when 19 resolutions were tabled on practically the same lines, out of which 9 were actually moved on the floor of the House. The discussion on that occasion took 3 days and the proceedings are now printed and published. I have gone through the printed proceedings once again to find out if there is anything new suggested now over what was done on that occasion. I have not however found anything in this debate which was not then mentioned.

It is indeed a proud privilege that a responsible Ministry enjoy, and an envious position that they occupy in the House and in the country, in that they have to receive all sorts of abuses from those who, for reasons known to themselves, do not agree with them in whatever they do or undertake. The present Ministry have also received the same in abundance and they ought to congratulate themselves for it.

Speaking for myself, for the few years, that I had the opportunity of discharging the responsibilities of a Member of the Council of Ministers, I maintained the view that when I had the honour of receiving abuses from the Opposition, I felt that I was in the right; but if unfortunately I had any word of praise from any one of them, I really grew very apprehensive that I might have gone wrong somewhere. I do not know how the present Ministry will take these abusive criticisms which have been showered upon them. It is certainly for them to say.

If we analyse the resolutions which have been actually moved on the floor of the House, it appears that they have charged the Ministry that

their policy regarding procurement and distribution of foodstuffs as also with regard to increasing production has been unplanned and ineffective and that the promulgation of Price Control Order has aggravated the misery of the people and that in the end it is said that the Ministry have failed to save the people by procuring for them the essential necessaries of life. So far as these specific points are concerned, I am sure, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department will give his answer to indicate the steps that Government have taken to procure foodstuffs from outside the province and also to distribute the same within the province. We know he gave an answer to the debate on the 14th of July last when he mentioned the quantity of various kinds of foodgrains brought into the province from outside——

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: On a point of order, Sir. We do not find the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies in this House. It is meet and proper that he should be present here.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: His Parliamentary Secretary is here.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: We do not want him.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, is it necessary that the Minister must be present here? The Chief Minister is present here. His other colleagues are also present here. It is ridiculous to insist that he must be present here all the time.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: May I rise on a point of order, Sir? On the 27th March, 1943, when Mr. Hamilton of the European Party was moving a censure motion on the Government of the day on the question of food, I was unfortunately absent for five minutes and I was taken to task by the House for my absence. The same principle, I hope, applies to every Minister under the Crown.

(At this stage the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy entered the Chamber.)

Mr. SPEAKER: He is already in.

Mr. MUKUNDA BEHARY MULLICK: He made another statement on the 22nd of July last in reply to a demand made on behalf of the Congress Parliamentary Party. It is certainly for him now to say what he has to say on the subject. I am not only sorry but am amazed at the observations of a very wild description made by various honourable members who took part in the debate on these resolutions which seem to suggest that the present Ministry of Bengal are wholly responsible for all sorts of misfortunes that have happened in this province of ours.

It is not my purpose to give an answer to the various things that have been said. If, however, we analyse the facts which have been happening for sometime now, it will appear that various events have happened for which no human being can be said to be responsible. In October last came the unprecedented storm and rain in the district of Midnapore.

It was followed by the flood and waves from the Bay. There is this war which has caused havoc to the whole world for the last 4 years. Every one knows that all normal and ordinary activities of society and of Government as also of all public institutions have been curtailed in a large measure and that they are all now engaged in doing works in furtherance of war efforts in some form or other. We have read of reports of other countries which are in the midst of war that not only their amenities of life have been cut short but that even some of them are prevented by orders from enjoying all such things. Result has been that they are all made to share the sufferings alike. In the next place, when it was expected that the *aus* crop would give some relief, came the sudden flood—firstly, in the river Damodar followed by the floods in the Ajoy and other rivers in the western parts of the province. We know the havoc that it has caused. It has not only ruined the crop which was almost ripe and ready for harvest, but that with the breach in the main railway line, the communication has also been cut off making it difficult, if not wholly impossible, for people to move about in the pursuit of their ordinary avocations of life and in making it impossible for Government and other public bodies to have various essential articles of every day use brought from places where there is yet a surplus. Can it be said under these circumstances that the present Ministry are even responsible for a state of affairs which are a direct result of these unprecedented events? I submit not.

Apart from all these natural calamities, if we examine the other factors which were brought into existence from June and July last year, there will remain no doubt in anybody's mind as to who could be said to be responsible for the very lamentable situation in which we have been landed today. About that time, no stock was taken of the foodgrains in this province but a sudden order was promulgated fixing the maximum price of rice. Result was that this stuff practically disappeared from the market. The Ministry, which was then functioning, had however their own agents appointed; and in some places they utilised even the services of permanent officials to get rice purchased for their agents from the interior of the province. Reports of various descriptions appeared from time to time to show how a serious situation was created when no proper attempt was made to deal with the same. This order was afterwards withdrawn and the result was that the prices began to rise at a time when there was no reason or justification for it. It was even indicated by some of the honourable gentlemen who were then in charge of Administration that although rice was available in the months of February and March in Bengal at high prices, there might come a time a few months later, when no rice would be available even if anybody would pay Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 a maund. One can very well imagine the panic that such irresponsible statements would have caused in the minds of innocent people who cannot be expected to be in the know of things which have been happening in this province. If the present Ministry have not done anything else, they have at least done this that soon after they assumed

responsibility of the Administration of the province towards the end of April last, they put a stop to the rise of prices in the upward direction and that in the next place, they got the Government of India to withdraw the ban from the neighbouring provinces and succeeded in getting a large quantity of foodstuffs brought to this province. In this attempt of theirs, I do not understand how if instead of appointing Ispahanis, who are strong enough to suffer a risk, as their agents, they had appointed Dutts, Sens, Kabirs and Zamans as their agents, it would have been of any help to this province.

The Hon'ble the Chief Minister in winding the debate on his demand for Extraordinary Charges on the 23rd July last stated that a cry was raised suggesting that a price limit should be immediately put and as soon as this has been done, we find that whatever foodgrains there were in the market the day before, have now all evaporated. It does not take too long for anyone to find out the reason for this. It only indicated how the mischievous propensities of a body of irresponsible propagandists, pretending to speak on behalf of the people of this unfortunate province, could have led or misled people in charge of supplying foodgrains to the public to withdraw all the same from the market.

I have had information from several places which suggests that various organisations which are political, semi-political or even semi-religious and the people connected with them, are constantly moving from place to place in the interior of the province in advising such irresponsible people who are in charge of the duty of supplying foodstuffs to the public for a legitimate price, to withdraw the same in order to introduce a wreck in the ordinary machinery only to gain their own private, personal or political ends. Nothing is more unfortunate than a situation of this character. It will not do any good to anybody if such people go about doing propaganda only, without trying in the least to do even the small thing that one is entitled or is in a position to do.

I agree that sufficiently effective steps have not yet been taken by the Ministry to bring such irresponsible people to book. Officers or non-officials —whoever they may be,—when found to do anything of the kind, should be immediately dealt with at least for the purpose of putting a stop to this sort of mischievous propensities.

I do not belittle or minimise the seriousness of the present situation. But if what has been said here and outside that people are dying in hundreds, thousands and lakhs is at all correct, then the whole of the sixty millions of people of Bengal would have ceased to exist by now. We have after all to remember that Government are composed of human beings and that they are not all-knowing and all-powerful and that their resources are also limited. Again human beings are entitled to make mistakes. The question however is whether the Ministry have properly used their resources in the discharge of this very serious responsibility of theirs. If they have—and if they have not yet been able to bring a millennium—I do not think they are guilty of any of the charges or allegations which have been sought to be levelled against them. If they have

not got any sufficient resources, it is only necessary for all of us—specially those who claim to represent any public opinion—to help them in discharging this heavy responsibility of theirs. Mere showering of abuses does not help anybody.

We know that so long as the Ministry function on the basis of a joint responsibility and have no misgiving or misunderstanding amongst themselves and are honest and true to their oaths, there is no difficulty for them and that they will not go out of office however much some of us may wish. When the other Ministry went out of office they know best why they did so. We find it to our sorrow that when they went out not only the Administration was left in a hopeless condition but that the whole thing was left practically off the gear. It is no wonder, therefore, that the present Ministry should take some time in putting the whole thing back to order.

In the course of this debate again the cry of a national Ministry was also raised. I will not repeat what I said on the last occasion as to what a national Ministry would mean; but even if one-thousandth part of what we witnessed before the present Ministry came into office is sought to be repeated, we will only pray to God Almighty to save us and this unfortunate province from such a national Ministry.

The resolutions as worded and the reasons as advanced in support of them are nothing but mere showering of abuses by a body of people who have nothing to offer to solve the serious problem at a very difficult time. Every one of us has to admit that the present Ministry are trying their very best. The resolutions therefore do not lead us anywhere and I have therefore no other alternative but to oppose all of them.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: Sir, I have carefully heard the speech of Mr. Mullick. He said in his speech that these motions had been moved for political purposes. We heard the same thing when the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy replied to the debate on the last occasion. The other day when Sir Nazimuddin replied to the debate on his demand under "63—Extraordinary Charges" he said that it was propaganda. We on this side are telling this House about the dearth of food, scarcity of foodgrains and the distress of the homeless vagrants moving in the streets of Calcutta as well as in the district and subdivisional headquarters. When we voice the grievances of a vast number of people it cannot be propaganda in that way. Members opposite perhaps walk with their eyes shut in the streets of Calcutta and through their constituencies so they have not been able to see anything. It is a peculiar thing to notice in this House and I mark it with great regret that while this discussion was going on in the last few days my friends on the other side were smiling, were laughing and some of them went so far as to offer taunting reflections on this side. They might not have felt for these people, they might not have any heart to feel for these people, but at least for common courtesy they should have kept up a sorrowful appearance. It is a common courtesy and decorum in all societies of all countries that

when a story of calamities is heard one must pause for a while and assume an appearance of sympathy and sorrow. It was quite shameless to assume an appearance quite contrary to that. The other day I heard the honourable member representing the Muslim Chamber of Commerce quoting a *Hadis* while defending the firm of Messrs. Ispahani and Co. against charges levelled against that firm by members on this side of the House. Sir, I would request him to recollect to his memory a short *Hadis*—meaning that sense of decency and shame is the branch of the tree of faith. He being well versed in Arabic, Persian and Urdu ought to have explained to his comrades all round him that if they could not feel for the suffering people at least they might assume an appearance of sympathy and sorrow when this miserable and woeful tale of these millions was told in this House by members on this side. That the situation is grave, that the situation is very acute has been admitted on all hands here and abroad. The other day Mr. Amery made a statement in the House of Commons where he admitted the prevalence of a terrible famine in Bengal and that the toll of famine was 30 per cent. over the normal. While the same thing is said from this side of the House it is called propaganda. Will Sir Nazimuddin tell us whether the statement of Mr. Amery is a propaganda against his Ministry? Is it a propaganda against Sir Nazimuddin's Ministry by people of England? Sir, I shall not dwell upon these things longer.

I shall come straight to my point that the food situation has come to this worst state because of the mishandling of the problem by the present Ministry. Certainly there were other factors responsible for shortage of food but the present miserable situation and the acute distress are the outcome of the mishandling of this Ministry and this Ministry is responsible for the present situation. Sir, we have been hearing from the mouths of members opposite a favourite catch phrase that this Ministry has been left a legacy by Mr. Fazlul Huq's Ministry. Sir, what was the verdict of that Ministry before going out of office regarding the foodstuffs in Bengal? It was a definite verdict of shortage. If that was followed by the present Ministry declaring that there was a definite shortage, the situation would have been otherwise. But soon after the assumption of office by the present Ministry instead of accepting the legacy of shortage they assumed that there was surplus and launched upon a scheme of anti-hoarding drive for finding food in the houses of poor house-holders, agriculturists and cultivators. What was the effect of it? The little quantity of foodgrains that was still available in the mufassal came out of the possession of these growers, these small cultivators and house-holders, for fear of seizure and confiscation by Government. Sir, the favoured agents, the sole agents of the present Ministry got a golden opportunity to buy at any price they liked and to bring it up to Calcutta. Thus the whole country was denuded of foodstuffs and foodgrains.

Sir, while this Ministry assumed office rice was selling at Rs. 18. Soon after there was a meteoric shooting up of the price of rice to Rs. 45 in a couple of months. There was no rest, there was no halt. What did

the present Ministry do? Just now we heard from Mr. Mullick that this Ministry tried at first to control the price. Was there any price control during the few days of April and in the months of May, June and July and the major portion of August? Just before this House was summoned we saw an order from the Department of Civil Supplies controlling the price of rice and paddy. What was its effect? Soon after the promulgation of the order the small quantity of food that was still available in the market disappeared. Sir, in the city of Dacca, the home of Sir Nazimuddin, the Chief Minister, there is dearth of rice and I can tell this House that one Government officer of rank wanted to buy one maund of rice at Rs. 75 and a Muslim gentleman who was fasting without food went to the market to buy a seer of rice and he could not get it for Rs. 2. He had to fast again without food. This is the result of that order. Without supply control of price of foodstuffs is foolish, and farce. If this Ministry assume that there was sufficient supply then certainly this control of price of rice and paddy would have done some good to the people. Sir, this Department of Civil Supplies has become synonymous for corruption and maladministration. Sir, I would take the House with me not here in Calcutta the food position of which has been very well described by many of my honourable friends here, but to the countryside and I wish to tell the House how the Civil Supply Department has been functioning there. There is a Civil Supply Officer with a small office and staff at my place; he thinks that the Subdivisional Officer and the District Magistrate have no control over him, being under the direct control of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies. I will tell the House about the way in which the distribution of foodstuffs and kerosene is carried on at the controlled rates. There are two sets of dealers—one dealing in white kerosene and the other in what is known as unrefined kerosene. But this officer deprived the latter set of their quota for no fault of theirs and distributed unrefined kerosene to those dealing in white kerosene. (At this stage the member reached his time-limit but was allowed to conclude his speech in five minutes' time.) There was a hawker named perhaps Dhonai who was usually given 6 tins for sale at controlled rate, but he was deprived of them and for his maintenance a sum of Rs. 25 was forced upon the approved dealers as a monthly bonus. To keep up their own purse after payment of premium for favour shown to them and after payment to Dhonai, these dealers had recourse to secret sale at ten to twelve annas a bottle in the black market.

Sir, several maunds of *atta* and sugar and 100 tins of kerosene were placed in the charge of the Secretary of the local Subdivisional Muslim League for distribution during this holy month of *Ramzan;* but the articles were being distributed only among League Mussalmans depriving other Mussalmans of their requirements. Sir, is it the policy of the Food Minister that a particular section of the Muslims supporting the Ministry should be favoured by Government? Today is the 26th day of the holy month of *Ramzan*, but may I enquire whether these articles have gone

even to any League Muhammadan, not to speak of Muslims in general? Sir, I can inform the House that those have gone to the black market to fill the pockets of the favoured people of the Food Minister. Sir, this is the way in which food is being administered in our part of the province by the Supply Officer of Government. Sir, there is no stock register for *atta*, sugar and flour and of other commodities; there is no register of approved vendors. Everything is on loose papers. You will find, Sir, that there are a set of venders at one time, and then suddenly one fine morning you find them all having disappeared and having been replaced by a new set of men. Seal and slip of Supply Office are freely used for wrongful gain. During the month of *Saban* when the Sabebarat festival took place, certain quantities of *atta*, sugar and flour are reported to have been sent out but no Mussalman in the mufassal got any sugar, *atta* or flour; that was what happened in our part of the country, and the whole quantity went into the black market, the major portion of which was sold out to a gentleman on the occasion of the *sradh* ceremony of his deceased mother. Lastly, Sir, when the District Magistrate of our place called the local leaders in a conference for a solution of the present acute food shortage and we all agreed to co-operate with him in this matter, the Assistant Secretary of the Local Subdivisional Muslim League jumped up and thanked his brother, the Secretary of the Faridpur Muslim League, for forcing the Minister of Civil Supplies to give seven thousand maunds of rice for people of the Gopalgunj subdivision. Sir, in reply to the debate on food on the last occasion the Minister of Civil Supplies said that five thousand maunds of rice had been sent to Gopalgunj. The statement no doubt was true and the thing was sent for the benefit of the local people in general but not for the purpose of propaganda being made by a certain party or coterie of people represented by the Secretary of the local Muslim League. (At this stage the member again reached his time-limit but was allowed to conclude his speech.) Sir, since the promulgation of price control the situation has become graver and whatever little stock of food there was previously in the market has disappeared. I appeal to the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supply to make supplies immediately available throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, and I conclude with the proverb quoted by the Hon'ble Mr. Goswami that "he giveth twice who giveth soon".

Mr. C. GRIFFITHS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Fazlul Huq Ministry failed to ration foodstaff in Bengal, as was done in Bombay, and is therefore primarily responsible for all our woe and misery—people dying by thousands of starvation during the months of August and September.

Bengal needed monthly 7 lakhs of tons of rice to feed her people. Therefore when the crop for 1942-43 was only 69 lakhs of tons instead of 84 lakhs of tons, it was clear that under an increased demand there would be about three months' shortage. God alone knows what is going to happen during the next three months—October, November and December, before the harvest is gathered. It seems diabolical that people should be allowed [illegible] if there is food in the country. The Fazlul

Huq Ministry failed to commandeer rice at the lowest possible price to feed the poor which constitute four-fifths of the people and number about 40 millions. The Nawab Bahadur of Dacca was simple enough to open control shops to feed the poor—how many did he feed? He caused a panic and the struggle for existence began, prices shot up to Rs. 20 per maund making it impossible for the poor to live. Hoarding and the black market became the order of the day, run by cruel and greedy traders worse than the *thugs* we read of in History.

It was under such conditions that the Fazlul Huq Ministry was removed by the Governor and the Sir Nazimuddin Ministry was installed. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy stated that Bengal had a surplus that was hoarded, in consequence of which the neighbouring States refused to help because no drastic steps were first taken by him to commandeer stocks or to reduce prices. We must learn to help ourselves before we expect others to help us. Again all will agree, with adverse criticism and propaganda from the Opposition, which the Chief Minister Sir Nazimuddin says, "Even it did not stop at implicating the head of the province", in the circumstances it was necessary to be cautious and proceed step by step, but in the interval prices were mounting and soon reached Rs. 40 per maund, while the poor were dying in thousands due to the unfortunate scheme of the Nawab of Dacca, and this acted as a booby trap for Mr. Suhrawardy——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: May I rise on a question of privilege, Sir? We are agitated deeply by the report that within the precincts of the Assembly and just beyond it some hunger-marchers have been severely assaulted by the police and five persons have been arrested. It was at 2-30 p.m. that this incident took place. I hear that some of my esteemed friends went there and they saw that some persons were being roughly handled near the Assembly House. Sir, if the food debate goes on in an atmosphere like this and if people who are going to seek food outside are assaulted in this way the entire food debate will be reduced to a sheer mockery, and we believe the present Ministry presided over by Sir Nazimuddin who waxes so eloquent over civil liberty will not at least try to prevent people dying of starvation from approaching the members of the Assembly to lay their grievances before them.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Sir, I want to make one more statement with regard to this matter. I had just been passing by the Currency building where I saw a posse of constables belabouring another procession. What I noted was that the procession was coming to the Assembly and it is Parliamentary practice that all processions can come here and stand outside and their representatives can approach you through the members and see the members of their constituencies. Therefore, it is absolutely against all canons of Parliamentary practice to stop them and it is up to Sir Nazimuddin to say whether such a direction has been given to the police today.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir Nazimuddin, have you got anything to say?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I have got first of all no information but I contest the assertion that they have a right to approach the House and try to threaten the members in this manner. As a matter of fact, this is a prohibitive area and no procession is allowed during the session time to come to this place. This in itself would make it an illegal procession, and I am sure honourable members will agree that it will be extremely undesirable that people should come and in this manner try to intimidate the members of the Legislature to take any course of action.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that Sir Nazimuddin has been informed about this and that assault had actually taken place? The police might have cordoned them off.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I can say this that I have been in this House and I have had no information. But I know of one instance where an extremely despicable action was tried by some persons—I do not know who they were. Two days ago, I believe on Friday, I was leaving this building at about 12-20 or 12-30 when I saw a large number of destitute people assembled outside the Assembly building, and on enquiry I found that they came here and they all had cards in which it was written that if they came to the Assembly building they would be given cloth and food. And something else was done which I consider very despicable. Cards of these people by which they used to get their food were taken away and bogus cards were given to them and they came here with the result that they lost their food which they used to get. Here also I think deliberate mischievous attempts are being made to intimidate the members of this Assembly by making these people come here by false propaganda and false information and I think those who are doing this cannot be too strongly condemned for this kind of action.

Maulvi AZHAR ALI: Sir, through you I wish to inform the Chief Minister of another fact. While I was passing through Bowbazar in a tram there was a huge crowd and I saw that beggars, children and other people were coming in a procession and the police were not only obstructing them but belabouring them and the people were fleeing about here and there.

Mr. SPEAKER: The facts have been brought to the notice of Sir Nazimuddin and he has made his statement. I hope that will satisfy the House.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Not at all.

Mr. C. GRIFFITHS: Now, Sir, a press note states that after the 25th of September the wholesale price of rice will drop to Rs. 20. Mark the figure. It was the price for which the Fazlul Huq Ministry was removed. This price will incidentally help the hoarders referred to by Mr. Suhrawardy. They will keep all their stocks hidden and starve more people to death. (A voice: Yes. His friend Ispahani.) They will secure rice at cheaper rates from next year's crop and then sell at Rs. 20 making a profit. Sir,

the present Government first to commandeer all the rice in the province at this price, and secondly, to take over the surplus of next year's crop which, I understand, is about 38 lakhs of tons? At the lowest possible price, say at 50 per cent. more than the pre-war rates it will cost Rs. 65 crores. Why should we pay 500 per cent. more than pre-war rates, that is Rs. 217 crores *plus* another Rs. 22 crores for the retailer and bring further miseries on the people?

It is here we need the help of the Opposition, first, to keep down the cost of food for the people, second, to give the jute cultivtors a fair deal to get their rice. If we raise the price of jute we will jeopardise our main industry which is giving Government 80 per cent. of their profits. Government did not hesitate to ration petrol. They commandeered our motor cars and houses. I can speak from experience. My motor car was taken for a pittance although I protested; my house is occupied by Government for the last two years and I have not received a pice as rent. (Cries of "shame", "shame" from the Opposition benches.) Therefore why should the entire resources of the province, the labour of nearly 40 to 45 million people, pass through the hands of a few agents who will reap the sole benefit?

America says that the food crisis is a British affair. The British Parliament says it is our affair, the affair of the legislature. If we vote against this Ministry we only bring in the previous one. As we need an all-parties Government at a critical time like this, the only solution is for the Government to apply section 93 of the Act, and to form such a Ministry. If this cannot be done the Governor should govern with an Advisory Board consisting of Hindus, Muslims and British. Bengal is a war base. It is occupied by the military. The cutting off of food supplies is a war measure adopted by Japan. Therefore the province could come under military control. What we want is a good and strong Government that will look to the interest of all and not only to its own supporters. (Applause and cheers.)

Dr. SANAULLAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have always been a silent spectator rather than a violent talker but today I could not keep quiet while the condition of Chittagong is the worst possible and there is no rice at all in the markets of Bengal. The other day my honourable friend Khan Bahadur Fazlul Quadir gave a somewhat rosy picture of Chittagong. From my personal experience I can say that Chittagong is at present passing through the most acute crisis in its history. There is no rice at all in the market. In the earlier part of the year, we had a union board conference presided over by the District Magistrate. There we suggested at that time that there should be a food census at least of the district of Chittagong because that is the frontier district in the province and the Japs are just on the other side of Chittagong, but that was not heeded to. On the contrary, huge quantities of rice were commandeered, I do not know for what purpose, from the southern part of the Chittagong district, especially Cox's Bazar subdivision, from big zemindars like Mahmudullah Chowdhury, Haji Yarali Khan Chowdhury, Ahmed Kabir Chowdhury and others. Where these large quantities of rice went we do not know. As

a matter of fact in the meeting of the District Board once that question was raised and the Subdivisional Officer, Sadar "B" subdivision, said that this was a false propaganda, that Government was not taking any rice for military or semi-military purposes from the district of Chittagong. But when one military contractor, Maulvi Monsob Ali Chowdhury, said that he had been supplying so much rice from the district to the military the Subdivisional Officer had to admit that. From these it appears that from early in December practically almost all the rice was taken out from the district of Chittagong mainly for the consumption of mules or for military or semi-military purposes, or for what purposes we do not know and we were not taken into confidence. At present there is no rice at all available in the market. We approached the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies who is always anxious for the co-operation of the Opposition. The other day we went to the office of the Civil Supplies Department and had a talk with the various officers of the department. I went to Mr. Aziz Ahmed, to Mr. J. N. Talukdar and to Mr. Rajan and the reply I got from them was to the effect that I should see the District Magistrate of Chittagong, and that whatever supplies they sent to Chittagong they sent to the District Magistrate of Chittagong, and they advised me to get foodgrains from him. Fortunately, the Additional District Magistrate of Chittagong Mr. McInerny was present in Calcutta at that time as there was a conference going on. I got in touch with him over the 'phone and he assured me that as soon as they got the requisite supplies from Government they would give us whatever we wanted for relief purposes. At Calcutta there is a Central Chittagong Relief Committee. The Bengal Relief Committee was good enough to advance about Rs. 10,000 and we locally collected about Rs. 5,000, but we are not getting any foodgrains. I personally saw the District Magistrate with the President of the Central Relief Committee and he assured us that he would help us. We demanded 1,000 maunds of rice per month, but the District Magistrate agreed to give us only 500 maunds. The latest information is that some office-bearers of the District Relief Committee and other members of the said Committee saw the District Magistrate and he said: "I will give you supply tomorrow". Everyday they saw him, he told them "I will give you tomorrow", but that tomorrow, perhaps, will never come. During the last session of the Assembly Mr. Suhrawardy said on the 16th July that he had sent to Chittagong 14,000 maunds of rice and 26,000 maunds of paddy, but may I ask him for what purpose this quantity was sent. Was it for A.R.P. or the police or for Government employees, or for military purposes or for the civil population? The other day he said that 62,000 maunds of rice was being sent to the Chittagong Division. May I know what has happened to this rice and why was it requisitioned? How much has been sent to the different District Magistrates, namely, of Tippera, Chittagong and Noakhali? Was this quantity of rice required for Government officers or for the police, etc.? During the regime of the last Ministry Mr. Suhrawardy in the course of his speech said that the Ministry was making a mockery of the food situation as the Hon'ble Minister in charge was absenting from the Assembly to avoid supplementary questions. May I ask him what has happened to my

question which I put during the last session of the Assembly? I have not yet received any reply to that question lest there should be a discussion about that on the floor of the House. On the 22nd July, I wrote him a personal letter offering my humble co-operation and I wanted to know the statistics, but up till now I have not been favoured even with any acknowledgment from his department, although the letter was duly received by Mr. Sarkar on 22nd July, 1943. That is the kind of co-operation he is prepared to extend to us. If he treats us like this, how can we co-operate with him? In spite of this treatment, I went to him on behalf of the people of Chittagong, but up till now nothing has been done. I approached the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin for enlisting his support to the non-official relief committee, but he refused. This is the kind of co-operation that we can expect from Government. The Hon'ble Minister said that we should not take the food situation a plaything of party politics, but by his action he is doing the same thing. In politics there is no sincerity; there are only tall talks. It is just like this: one side says something and the other side denies and says that it is a lie. The times are abnormal. We sincerely hope that the Hon'ble Minister will go through his own speech—I do not like to reproduce his words, but I would only refer him to pages 4-8 of his speech delivered on the food debate during the regime of the last Ministry and I hope he will think over and ponder over these lines coolly and calmly and consider at what stage they have brought Bengal today. The people are dying in hundreds for want of food. The Hon'ble Minister has said that they are doing their level best and are doing whatever is humanly possible, but we are not going to be satisfied with that. After all is said and done we want food. If we do not get food we cannot be satisfied. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Jalaluddin told me, "We cannot take you into confidence" when I asked him what was the actual deficit in the district of Chittagong. There are three subdivisions in the district of Chittagong; in one subdivision alone, viz., Sadar "A" there is a deficit of 1,450,000 maunds up to December, i.e., 2½ lakhs of maunds per month according to the Government census. What is the amount of foodgrains sent in wheat, *bajra* and other things? And what is the amount requisitioned by the District Magistrate? I wanted to get an answer to all these questions from the District Magistrate but he referred me to the Civil Supplies Department for the information. When I approached the Civil Supplies Department, they asked me to approach the District Magistrate, so that we are driven from pillar to post and from post to pillar; that is our hard lot.

এই যে ক্ষেতে শস্য ভরা তোমার নয়ত একটী ছড়া
তোমার হলে পরের দেশে চালান কেন হয়?
তোমরা শুধু চাষের মালিক গ্রাসের মলিক নয়
কার স্বদেশে সর্ব্বনেশে এমনি অভিনয়?

Thus today Bengal is visualising to her bittter cost the situation, so vividly described by her patriotic poet in the past.

Let the 13 Ministers with their 17 Parliamentary Secretaries stick to their jobs even at this unprecedented national crisis. But we demand that at least these Ministers should be bold enough to give a true picture of Bengal's present position to outside Bengal and India. If they do not do that, they will be guilty of murder and culpable homicide at least for concealing the real fact from the outside world. If the elected representatives of Bengal minimise the gravity of the situation, foreigners and Britishers will certainly say that the food situation is being over-dramatised in Bengal. If the elected representatives think that the Ministry has done all that is humanly possible to tackle the food problem then why should we find fault with the British Government and the Government of India, they are also doing everything humanly possible under the existing war conditions.

With these words, Sir, I commend the motion moved by the Opposition to the acceptance of the House. (Loud applause from the Opposition benches.) And let Mr. Suhrawardy remember the Persian verses—

تکبر عزازیل را خوار کرد * بزندان لعنت گرفتار کرد

Mr. HARENDRA KUMAR SUR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, India is a perpetually unhappy and undernourished country. Poverty and unemployment are the two constant companions of almost every household in this country. To thrust a total war upon a poor country like India is criminal, most inhuman and cruel. The result is what we find today all around us hunger, starvation and deaths, famine and pestilence.

Bengal today is in the grip of a terrible famine and if the war is protracted for a longer period other provinces will have to meet the same fate. Because of the geographical position Bengal has become the first casualty and the people of Chittagong Division are the worst sufferers. Their miseries and sufferings can better be imagined than described.

Thousands of families have been rendered homeless and landless. Vast areas of cultivated lands have been converted into air-fields and military camps. The denial policy has been given effect to with full vengeance.

The number of beggars have increased how many times it is difficult to estimate. They are moving from place to place and from one district to another for a morsel of bread. They are dying in large numbers on their way. Every morning you will find dead bodies lying in public places, roads and railway platforms.

Sir, the number of deaths has swollen up to such an extent that dead bodies have been thrown away into the river and *khals* like dead cattle. As a result of starvation from day to day the vitality of the people has diminished almost to a breaking point and they have become easy prey to the epidemics such as cholera, dysentery, etc. Cholera recently exacted a very heavy toll. Of course National Welfare Units were despatched but they came too late and they are now sitting idle for want of medicine. Malaria has become a constant companion in every household but quinine is scarcely available. A large number of kitchens have been opened in

the Noakhali district. But almost all of them have been closed as the villagers could not meet the daily expenses to run the kitchens and the authorities demanded a local contribution of 25 per cent. Two chittaks of rice have been allowed per head per diem. One cannot eat gruel from day to day as prepared in these kitchens as a matter of routine. It can delay but cannot prevent death. The distress is acute everywhere throughout the province. The nature's calamities have further aggravated the miseries and sufferings of the people of Midnapore and portions of the neighbouring districts. The number of deaths reported in the Calcutta papers every morning indicate the gravity of the situation. Reports are coming every day from rural areas that rice is not available in open markets. The Congress visualised this terrible state of things and the Congress Ministries resigned. They shuddered to think that they would serve as instruments in the hands of those who have been sitting tight on the destiny of this unfortunate country to multiply the miseries and sufferings of the unfortunate people of this country.

The Congress demanded a national Government during the war as an instalment of complete independence after the war which would not interfere with the military operations and would at once enter into a treaty of alliance with the United Nations to help them to win the war. They wanted to create an atmosphere of real co-operation. If the Congress demands had been acceded to, the Congress would have created an enthusiasm and inspire a spirit of sacrifice and suffering into the minds of the people for a common object the defence of India—the vision of an independent India as a result of victory of the United Nations.

But that is not to be. The Congress is banned and suppressed. The Congress leaders and prominent Congress leaders, are confined in prison cells. The Congress is in bondage.

The policy followed and the methods pursued by the Government for securing co-operation in war efforts have failed to inspire a spirit of sacrifice and suffering amongst the people of this country—which is so vital, so essential for the purpose of creating an united front against the enemy. On the contrary it has created a psychology of personal gain, power and position. Everybody thinks in terms of self-interest, anxiously awaiting to seize every opportune moment to make money, to obtain power and position by any means fair or foul and this is why there is so much corruption, jobbery and bribery even amongst Government officials who have to carry out the policy and programme of the Government into effect. The profiteering motive has been allowed to grow to its fullest height. The demoralisation of the people of this country is complete. The policy of the Government is responsible for all what has been happening today in this country under our very eyes.

India is a deficit country in the matter of her food requirements. Bengal is a deficit province in the matter of rice—the principal food of the Bengalees. The population has increased but, Sir, the Government of the country has got no crop policy, the Department of Agriculture has never

made any serious attempt according to a planned scheme to increase the production of foodstuffs so as to make the country self-supporting in the matter of her food requirements.

Even when this country was dragged into the war the Government of India had no food policy. If really they had any, they would have collected accurate statistics by taking a food census or otherwise at the beginning of the war to get them acquainted with the actual food situation in the country and then on reliable data thus collected they would have drawn up a definite policy and a planned programme to meet the food situation in the country as a whole—not only to meet the military requirements and the requirements of the Government servants and essential services but also to meet the requirements of the civil population as a whole. But they have done nothing in that direction; on the contrary they have carried on vigorous propaganda by issuing statements and communiques to create an impression in the country at large that there is no shortage but there is surplus. In the meantime the agents of the Government of India, the Government of Bengal, the agents of the railway companies, factories, mills, industrial concerns and public houses have been allowed to purchase foodgrains at any price and in this way huge reserves of foodgrains have been created by those concerns for their own employees thereby multiplying the shortage to an alarming extent. They have applied their whole mind to meet the military requirements and those of the essential services and the civil population has been totally ignored. They have ignored the primary obligation of a civilised Government to meet the food requirements of the people. After meeting the requirements of the military people and the essential services what little remains will be available to the rest of the people. The result of this policy is that one section of the people has got enough food and is having extravagant dishes every day and the rest of the people shall have to die of starvation. Now that the crisis has reached its climax is the Government prepared to requisition from these concerns the foodgrains found in excess of their requirements for the next three months and liquidate the same to meet the requirements of the civil population? If the answer is in the negative, does it not lead to one and one conclusion only, viz., the Government cannot guarantee free flow of supply of foodgrains and therefore they are not prepared to take any step which, as they apprehend, may hamper the war efforts in any way? If this is true, why have they introduced the system of control of prices? Is it because that this would create black markets so that the Government and those concerns which are directly or indirectly helping in the war efforts may purchase from the black markets to meet any emergency that may arise in the prosecution of the war?

If that is so, let them tell the people openly and in unequivocal language that they cannot meet both ends together, the prosecution of war and to save the civil population from starvation and death.

But, Sir, is the Government prepared to remove all obstacles and allow the people to stand on their own legs to organise a united front on the food issue at this crisis? Otherwise that will also hamper war efforts.

Mr. ANANDILAL PODDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, grave allegations of corruption and nepotism have been made against the Ministry in the matter of food purchase and distribution, and, Sir, it will not do to say that these charges have been levelled only by the opponents of the Ministry. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy has not been able to meet the charges and has not only negatived any idea of public enquiry in the matter but has dared justify the situation. The Hon'ble Minister has pointed out the hotels and the eating houses and is happy that in Calcutta people having some money need not starve. I confess I was not prepared for this reply to the charges of mismanagement even from Mr. Suhrawardy.

Sir, in spite of the Hon'ble Minister's rosy picture of supply to Calcutta, the death roll in the city is mounting. The Department concerned does not care to give out the whole truth even in regard to Calcutta and does not give an account of the the dead bodies picked up from the streets. Sir, the Civil Supplies Minister would do well, if he cared to keep a record of these deaths, these passive murders that have been taking place all over the province. Had the disgraceful truth been disclosed, more succour would have been forthcoming from outside. People are dying in the streets and members of the lower middle class families in this city of palaces are pining away behind the doors, and the Hon'ble Minister ought to feel ashamed to say that the food situation has improved. He knows that people are not getting their supplies in Calcutta even for money and he must be aware that foodstuffs are not available for money even in those districts, which have been declared surplus areas to suit the purposes of the Government. It is all the more shameful, Sir, while admitting that famine condition obtains in certain areas in Bengal, the Hon'ble Minister invents lame excuses for not declaring them as famine areas. He wants to wear the Crown but would not bear the responsibility.

Sir, the Ministers are deceiving themselves and the world by announcing that they are organising relief on a famine basis. Thanks to the Punjab Minister, Sardar Baldev Singh for his disclosure and revelations and the charges brought by him. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy has not been able to meet these charges. He cannot explain why milling charge at the rate of Rs. 3 was given in Bengal, nor the so-called reserve for stabilisation purposes can explain away the big gap between the Punjab price of Rs. 10-8 and Bengal price of Rs. 17-8. How is it that after the Punjab Minister's revelations, the price of wheat in Bengal has come down to a reasonable level? No explanation is forthcoming as to why the previous high prices could not be brought down before these revelations by the Punjab Minister. Now coming to distributions, it is stated that wagon loads of foodstuffs have been imported into the province but where has the stock gone? It has sunk into the now famous bottomless pit by those whom the Ministry entrusted with the task of distribution. It is colossal corruption in the matter of distribution, which is responsible for it, and unless this corruption is eradicated, there is no hope of any relief for this unfortunate province.

The Ministry itself is responsible for raising a reasonable suspicion about its *bona fides* and only an impartial Tribunal can adjudge whether or not they themselves are guilty of it.

Sir, the Ministers are tinkering with the problem of distribution. They allow things to drift on and ponder over new schemes. They could not introduce rationing even in Calcutta, although a plan was ready several months ago. Sir, without adequate stock reserve and guarantee for regular supply with controlled price, rationing is nonsense. But we do not know what arrangements have been or are being made for procuring sufficient stock before rationing is introduced in Calcutta. The enumeration list that was prepared at a considerable expense and labour, has become a scrap and a fresh enumeration has been decided upon. I am sure the whole of October will be over before the next step is taken and the citizens of Calcutta will remain the dupes of tomorrow. Meanwhile, the war clouds are clustering in the eastern horizon and from all accounts, Sir, Calcutta and the industrial area will have to face heavy enemy air raids as soon as the Allies have started their offensive. We have yet to know, Sir, what arrangements have been made for foodstuffs being available during that emergency period. I am afraid, Sir, if such an emergency does arise, more people will die of starvation than by enemy bombs. The seizure of some negligible hoarded stock here and there, Sir, may help in getting up good newspaper reports but does not exonerate the Ministry of the charges brought against them or their responsibility, and the problem remains unsolved. The actual position is that the Government cannot supply the retail dealers with the stock they were promised and even the commercial bodies, who have been endeavouring for distribution among their constituents and workers, have been refused supplies, and the supply that has been arranged through controlled shops and other agencies consists mostly of rotten rice and *atta* full of worms and insects. Does the Hon'ble Minister know that some of these foodstuffs are unfit for human consumption and carry germs of fell diseases? Can he explain the sources of this supply? Will he tell the House who is profiteering in respect of these rotten foodstuffs?

Sir, Bengal has fallen on evil times. In reply to the cable of the Mayor of Calcutta for relief of distress in Bengal the President of the United States of America has sympathised with the sufferings of the people of Bengal and have assured him that they would facilitate the efforts of the British Indian officials in the matter of alleviating the distress. But the Secretary of State for India is content by referring to the provincial autonomy and this blessed Ministry is supposed to shape the destinies of this unfortunate province. It will not do to criticise the Central Government or the railways. Nor will it do to impute motive to all sorts of criticism. They must either function efficiently or go out. Sir, the Hon'ble Civil Supplies Minister has appealed for co-operation. The public in and outside Bengal did not wait for his appeal and I must repeat that had the truth, the whole of the ugly truth about the mounting death roll been disclosed, more succour would be forthcoming. The Ministry stages a farce of co-operation by calling one or two conferences with a few trade representatives but whenever any important step is taken, the plan is hatched behind closed doors. A lot of criticism has been made about

Messrs. Ispahanis and I asked the Government to clear certain points regarding their appointment as the sole purchasing agents in the last session. Not only no explanation has been given but the Ministry is adamant and they have been appointed as purchasing agents for as many as eight districts. The Ministry did not think fit to consult non-official public opinion in the matter. And I am afraid, Sir, after the Government agents complete their purchase in these districts, rice will be a rare commodity in most of the villages in Bengal. To all appearances, Sir, the Ministry has failed to tackle with the problems and is now vaguely appealing for public co-operation. I agree, Sir, in a crisis like this, public co-operation is essential but I dare say it is not the want of public co-operation which is responsible for this colossal crisis but the corrupt contrivances of the incompetent machinery of the Government. Besides, the co-operation of a band of workers, who are prepared to sacrifice their lives to save the millions who are fast moving towards the grave is also essential. Sir, even a thousand such genuine workers can do wonders. They can organise local help and inspire confidence, putting a check to the destitutes' trek to towns. But a large number of such genuine workers are to be found from among those who are being detained without any trial or conviction. Some of the workers recently released, have been doing wonderful work and I am confident if the relief work is entrusted to them, the situation will greatly improve. This can be done as an experimental measure and I am sure these workers will devote themselves to the relief work and there need be no apprehension so long as the Defence of India Rules are on the Statute Book. Have the Ministry got the courage to do so? They will be implementing their promise and in return will get real help in this desperate situation. But, Sir, the Ministers have not only changed opinions but some of them have changed chameon-like colour. And I am afraid, they have been completely demoralised and sooner they shed their responsibility, the better for this province.

Mrs. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, আমি আজকে food সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করবার জন্য দাঁড়িয়েছি। দাঁড়াতে গিয়ে প্রথমেই আমার মনে হয় যে food সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করতে দাঁড়িয়েছি কার কাছে? আজ কয়দিন ধরে food সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা হচ্চে। শুধু এখানে নয়, কলিকাতা নগরীর আনাচে কানাচে, অলিতে গলিতে, রাস্তায়, বাড়ীর সামনে, "খাবার দাও", "ফেন দাও" এই শব্দ প্রত্যেকের কাণে প্রতিনিয়ত বাজছে। কিন্তু এখানে বসে আজ কয়দিন ধরে এই খাদ্যপ্রশ্ন সম্বন্ধে যে আলোচনা হচ্চে, আমাদের Government এবং Government পার্টিতে যাঁরা আছেন তাঁদের মুখের দিকে তাকালে, তাঁদের আলোচনা শুনলে, মনে হয় যে,—মানবতা, মানুষের একটা বড় জিনিষ,—ভগবানের সৃষ্টির যে শ্রেষ্ঠ দান মানুষের মনুষ্যত্ব, সেই মনুষ্যত্ববিহীন জায়গায় আমরা এসে উপস্থিত হয়েছি। আমাদের যাঁরা গণৎকার তাঁরা হাত দেখার আগে বলেন যে দেখি Heart-line আছে কি না। হাতের ভিতর তার রেখা থাকেন এবং অনেক জায়গায় দেখা যায় গণৎকার বলে যে এখানে Heart-line নেই। তাই আমি বলছি যে আজকে আমাদের food মন্ত্রী মহাশয় এবং তাঁর সমর্থনকারী দলীয়েরা তাঁদের Heart-line যে কোথায় রেখে এসেছেন জানি না। আজকে কঙ্কালসার নরনারী,

কঙ্কালসার শিশুর দল রাস্তায় রাস্তায় অনাহারে মারা যাচ্ছে আর তাঁরা এখানে বসে Houseএতে আমাদের শুনিয়ে দিচ্ছেন যে, এখানে এত food আসছে, ওখানে এত food যাচ্ছে। মনে হয় যেন আমরা তাঁদের কাছে অতি ক্ষুদ্র শিশু ; আজ তাঁরা আমাদের এখানে ঘরের ভিতর বসে যা কিছু মিথ্যা ধাপ্পা শুনিয়ে দিচ্ছেন। তাঁদের আমি সভাপতি মহাশয়ের মারফৎ দিয়ে শুধু এই কথাই বলবো যে, মানবতার দিক দিয়ে, যে এসলামের ফতোয়া দিয়ে তাঁরা এখানে বসে আছেন সেই এসলামের মনেই তাঁদের এ আচরণে আঘাত লাগবে। এই যে সব নর-কঙ্কাল, ঐ সারে সারে অন্নের অভাবে আজ যারা প্রাণত্যাগ করে চলে গেছে তাদের মৃত আত্মা আজ এই Houseএর চারি পাশে ঘুরে ঘুরে তাদের কাছে শুধু এই কথাই বলছে যে, এর জবাব দিতে হবে। কেউ শিশু হারিয়েছে, কেউ স্বামী হারিয়েছে, কেউ স্ত্রী হারিয়েছে, কেউ ভাই-ভগিনী হারিয়েছে। এই যে নিদারুণ অবস্থা—তাঁদের একটু কি ভাবনা হয় না যে এর জবাব তাঁদের এসলামের কাছে দিতে হবে? হয়ত মনিবের কাছে জবাব দিতে না হতে পারে, কারণ যে মনুষ্যত্ববিহীন মনীবের অধীনে আমরা বাস করছি, তাঁর অধীনে বাস করে আমাদেরও মনুষ্যত্ব হারিয়ে গিয়েছে। তা' না হলে আজ এই দিনে, এমন অবস্থার দিনে, তাঁরা এখানে বসে হাসেন! food মন্ত্রী মহাশয় প্রত্যেক দিন কাগজে যে খবর বার করে দেন, প্রত্যেক দিন কাগজ খুলে তাতে দেখতে পাই বহু food আমাদের দেশে আছে। তাঁকে জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই, তবে রাস্তায় রাস্তায় কেন এত মানুষের কঙ্কাল, কেন প্রতি মিনিটে মিনিটে দেশময় এত লোক অনাহারে মারা যাচ্ছে, কেন বাংলার যারা ভবিষ্যৎ, যারা ভগবানের সৃষ্টির জীব, বাঁচবার অধিকার নিয়ে যারা জন্মগ্রহণ করেছে, আজ কার দায়িত্বের অবহেলায়, তারা দিক্‌বিদিক্ জ্ঞানশূন্য হয়ে, আজ সমস্ত হারিয়ে নিজেদের জীবন-লীলা শেষ করছে। এদের রক্ষা করবার দায়িত্ব কার আজ ছিল? Governmentএর দায়িত্ব এদের বাঁচানো এবং সে দায়িত্ব আজ কি তাঁরা পালন করছেন? আজকে তাঁরা হাসতে পারেন এখানে বসে ; হাসতে পাবেন তাঁদের সমর্থকেরা এখানে বসে। কিন্তু আজ তাঁদের হাসি আসে কি করে শুধু এই কথাই তাঁদের জিজ্ঞাসা করি।

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY : কে হাসছে?

Mrs. HEMAPROVA MAJUMDAR : কে হাসছে? আপনি হাসছেন। আজ যে Governmentএর অবহেলাতে ও ফাঁকিবাজিতে এই হাজারে হাজারে ছেলেরা মায়ের বুক শূন্য করে চলে যাচ্ছে, তার দায়িত্ব অবহেলার কথায় আজ তিনি হাসছেন। তাঁর হাসা উচিত নয়। তাই তাঁকে বলছি দয়া করে একটু উপর দিকে তাকিয়ে দেখবেন ; এর জবাব দিতে হবে ; একদিন না একদিন এর জবাব দিতে হবে ; না দিয়ে উপায় নেই। এসলামের দোহাই দিলে চলবে না। এসলাম আপনাদের থেকে অনেক উঁচুতে। আজ কি দুঃখ, কি কান্না, কি হাহাকার! এ আপনাদের কার্ণে পৌঁছোচ্ছে না? এর চেয়ে দুঃখের বিষয় আর কি জানি না। কোন্ স্বার্থে, কোন্ মোহে, কোন্ লোভে আজ এ Governmentএর আপনাদের সমর্থকেরা সহায়তা করে যাচ্ছে? আমি জানি না কি মোহ এর ভিতর আছে। জেনেও হয়ত বলতে গেলে defamationএ পড়তে হয়, না হলে বলা যেত যে কি মোহ। কেন? আপনারা জানেন, আমাদের তীর্থে গেলে রাস্তায় রাস্তায় দক্ষিণা দিতে হয়—যে এখানে শ্যামসুন্দর, এখানে দক্ষিণেশ্বর এই রকম করে করে দক্ষিণা দিয়ে যেতে হয়। আজকে আমাদের এই Governmentএর অধীনে, এই রকমই সমস্ত অবস্থা হয়েছে। এই রকম সমস্ত জায়গায় জায়গায় দক্ষিণা দিতে দিতে সুলভ খাদ্য আজ দুর্মূল্য ও দুষ্প্রাপ্য হয়েছে। দুগ্ধপোষ্য শিশুরা দুধ পর্য্যন্ত পাচ্ছে না।

যে দিন কাগজে দেখা গেল ২৪৲ টাকা চালের মণ, তার পরের দিনই বাজারে চাল আর নেই। আমি নিজে ৬০৲ টাকা দিয়ে চাল কিনেছি কুমিল্লা সহরে। খুলনায় এক বন্ধু সেখানে ৭০৲ টাকা দিয়ে চাল কিনেছেন। (A voice: ধরে দিলেন না কেন?) কেন কিনছে? ২৪৲ টাকা চাল পাওয়া যায় না বলে। কোথাও চাল নেই এবং খুঁজতে গিয়ে তারপরে সেই Black Market না কি বলেন, সেখানে গিয়ে ৭০৲ টাকা করে চাল কিনেছে। ঐ ঢাকা, নারায়ণগঞ্জ, মুন্সীগঞ্জ, মীরকাদিম, এই সমস্ত জায়গাতে চাল পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না। মুন্সীগঞ্জ থেকে খবর আসছে, ৮০৲ টাকা করে চাল, তাও পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না। অনেক সব member আছেন যাঁরা মফঃস্বল থেকে এসেছেন। এই M.L.A. মহোদয়েরা কি তাঁদের দেশবাসীর কাছ থেকে খবর পান্ না; তাঁরা কি বুঝতে পারেন না যে তাঁদের কি এখন করা চাই? তাঁদের কি একটুকু মনে হয় না যে আজ তাঁদের কর্ত্তব্য কি? কত বড় যে তাঁদের দায়িত্ব তা খাদ্য মন্ত্রী মহাশয় কি ভাবেন? উনি হয়ত আমাদের বাঙ্গালীর কথা নাও ভাবতে পারেন। কিন্তু আমাদের বাঙ্গালী বাংলাদেশের যে সমস্ত মন্ত্রী, আমাদের বাংলাদেশের যে সমস্ত সমর্থকেরা আছেন তাঁরা ভেবে দেখবেন, চিন্তা করে দেখবেন। আর একটা কথা তাদের কাছে আমি বলবো: এই যে কাতারে কাতারে লোক দেখতে পাচ্ছি তার মধ্যে আমরা ১৫।১৬।১৭ এই রকম বয়সের মেয়েদের দেখতে পাচ্ছি না। বৃদ্ধা ও শিশুদের দেখতে পাচ্ছি, কিন্তু এই সব মেয়েরা কোথায় গেল? এর জন্যে দায়ী কাদের করবো? কেন তাদের পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না? এ সম্বন্ধে খোঁজ করবার দায়িত্ব গভর্ণমেণ্টের। এই সব মেয়েদের কেন রাস্তায় দেখতে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না, তারা কোথায় গেল? তাঁরা আমাদের খোঁজ করে জানাবেন কি?

আমি শুনতে পেলাম যে Government কলকাতার এই যে কাতারে কাতারে লোক যাচ্ছে তাদের জন্য বাইরে কোথায় আশ্রয় তৈরী করেছেন। আমি মন্ত্রী মহাশয়কে এই কথা জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই যে, এই যে তাদের বাইরে নিয়ে যাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা হচ্চে—সেকি কলিকাতা নগরীতে দিবালোকে এইরকমভাবে শিশুর মৃত্যু, লোকের চক্ষুর পীড়াদায়ক বলেই। না, সত্যিকারের মানবতার জন্য, তাদের মানুষ করে দেওয়ার জন্য, তাদের খাওয়া দাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করবার জন্য, বা তাদের এমন কোন কাজ দেওয়ার জন্য, যাতে ভবিষ্যতে তারা করে খেতে পারে, সেই জন্যই এসব ব্যবস্থা তাঁরা করছেন? আমি এই কথাটা তাঁর কাছে জানতে চাই। আজকে তারা এখানে আসতে চাইলে; তাদের আসতে দেওয়া হয় নি। চতুর্দ্দিকে পুলিশ প্রহরী রাখা হয়েছে। তাদের এখানে দেখতে দিতে বোধ হয় কর্ত্তৃপক্ষ চান না। কিন্তু এই যে বাইরে রাস্তায় রাস্তায় যে দৃশ্য সকলেই দেখছে, সে দেখা তাঁরা নিবারণ করেন কি করে? আমার মনে হয়, Governmentএর এটা ভুলই হচ্ছে। আর সবশেষে আমি মন্ত্রী মহাশয়কে আবার জিজ্ঞাসা করছি যে এদের সরিয়ে কোথায় নেওয়া হচ্ছে, এবং কিজন্য তাদের নেওয়া হবে, এবং তাদের জন্য কি ব্যবস্থা করা হচ্চে সেটা আমাদের জানালে আমরা সুখী হবো।

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the gravamen of their charge against the present——

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Mr. Speaker, did he not speak on the first day of the discussion?

Mr. SPEAKER: No, he did not speak on this food debate. Yes, Mr. Siddiqi.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: The gravamen of the charge against the present Government is that it has appointed a Muslim business house as its sole agent to purchase foodgrains from outside Bengal. This has been done elsewhere also. I am not so sure that the barrage of criticism levelled against the Ispahanis is not an outcome of jealousy in rival trade quarters or an effort to hide the incompetence of their own proteges of the Denial Days. None will welcome more than I full publication of the report of Mr. Sommerset Butler. It will throw a good deal of useful light in solving this mystery.

The Denial Scheme and the removal of surplus stocks from the seaboard districts to safer places have come in for criticism. The total removed was 4,78,685 maunds of rice and 5,44,932 maunds of paddy. Except 68,750 maunds of rice shipped to Ceylon, the entire purchases were consumed in Bengal. For months, the industries, public utility organisations, Calcutta shops and markets, Government servants, areas in difficulties including Midnapore, 24-Parganas, Howrah, Chittagong and other places were fed from this "Denial" stock. The Leader of the Opposition knows this better than any one else, because it was during his regime that the removal was effected and it was in his time that the stock was consumed.

At the outbreak of the war the trade estimated the reserve stock of rice in Bengal to be sufficient for six months. Prices of all commodities began to move up; rice and paddy were no exception. Holders, both merchants and agriculturists, were tempted to release their stocks more freely. Demand too increased substantially. Industries already established began to work at full pressure and new industries sprang up. Aerodrome construction and other war work in and near Bengal, called for more labour. Bengal, the granary of Eastern India, became the happy hunting ground for industrialists and contractors. The army too bought through contractors and the Supply Department. Exports continued unabated and unrestricted. Ceylon, South Africa, Mauritius and friendly countries like Arabia and the islands in the Persian Gulf, had to be supplied with rice from India, as Siam, Saigon and Burma had been cut off. Burma alone meant in terms of rice a loss of 2¼ lakh tons to Bengal. The *aus* crop of 1942 was poor and almost a failure.

In October, 1942, the cyclone in Midnapore and 24-Parganas, the two most fertile and largest *aman* rice producing areas were devastated. Three million tons were lost. The *aman* crop naturally, fell short of calculation. Land and transport facilities added to the shortage. Bengal was, thus faced with a deficit, the effects of which began to be felt by February, 1943. Any person, who had paid the slightest attention to the problem, would have foreseen the difficult times ahead, as early as November, 1942. Complacency and lack of imagination added their quota to our misery. The Chief Minister, now the Leader of the Opposition, cannot feel happy over his performance at the Food Conference, in Delhi, in December, 1942, in which he declared that all was well with Bengal, none need worry about it, he would manage its affairs satisfactorily. Bengal was left out of the larger scheme. The millions now in distress are paying with their lives for

that folly of colossal magnitude. While other deficit provinces took speedy and effective steps to put their houses in order by curtailing consumption and increasing production of foodgrains and vegetables, our nawabs remained inactive and did nothing. All this happened while they were in office. I may be asked: Why then did the League assume office when it saw the tragedy ahead so clearly? My answer to that is: We took office because we wanted to serve and save Bengal.

It would have been cowardice to have shirked our duty. We took office, knowing that the tragedy could not be averted, with determination to work unceasingly and arrest the mischief that has been set afoot. We have worked towards that end. The Minister for Civil Supplies has not spared himself. He has worked night and day intelligently and determinedly. Bengal owes him a debt of gratitude and posterity will have reason to be grateful to him.

It has been said that the Ispahanis had purchased large stocks of rice and paddy at low prices and sold them to Bengal at a great profit, thereby making money out of the starving millions. Bengal consumes about 25 crores of maunds of rice per year; that means, about 7 lakhs of maunds per day. The Ispahanis have bought about 22 lakhs of maunds for the Government of Bengal, that is to say, a quantity that would last at the maximum for four days only out of 365 days. All this noise over the quantity purchased will at once prove why it is being made and the motives behind it. As a matter of fact on the 15th of March, 1943, their entire stock was 4,933 maunds of rice and 1,349 maunds of paddy. On the 31st March, 1943, it stood at 4,933 maunds of rice and 3,431 maunds of paddy. Those who are familiar with the trade will at once realise that this quantity would be less than a fleabite for a firm of the standing of M. M. Ispahani Ltd. You, Sir, declared the Government *functus officio* on the 29th March. Returns, as required by the rules, had to be submitted fortnightly. Had the Government of the Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition entertained the slightest suspicion about the Ispahanis, it would not have spared a moment to check up figures to land them into difficulties for, that would have meant, for their accusers, a major political victory.

Directly there was Free Trade in the North-Eastern Zone, on the 18th May, 1943, the Ispahanis sent their men, who were experienced and efficient, to places outside Bengal and in the Free Trade Zone, even before they had been appointed Government agents. By doing so they were in a position to give Bengal, within 48 hours, no less than 238,751 maunds of rice, at an average cost of Rs. 14-12-9 per maund. The Ispahanis gave over this rice, which they need not have done and no power on earth could have compelled them to do so, at cost price, when the ruling rate was Rs. 30 and above. Their profit at that rate would have been Rs. 36,29,761——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: At this stage, may I ask the honourable member to make it clear——(Uproar.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you rising on a point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, my esteemed friend Mr. Siddiqi is reading out a prepared speech quite unlike his usual practice. (The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: It is only a point of interruption!) My point of order is the point of order raised by Mr. Siddiqi himself as to how long would you permit a written and prepared speech to be delivered by advocates who are benefited by the charity of Ispahanis—— (Interruptions.)

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order. Will you kindly resume your seat?

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: From the day they were appointed agents, that is the 20th May, they have ceased to do business in foodgrains, they have no stocks of their own and, therefore, need no godowns and as a matter of fact they have none. It will also come as a surprise to many that after their experience of the surplus removal, intrigues, of the previous Government, the Ispahanis were not anxious to accept any responsibility for and on behalf of the Government. They had to be coaxed by the present Government and persuaded to take up the onerous task. The previous Government had created no organisation of its own to collect rice from inside and outside Bengal. No Indian or European business house would take up the work either on the ground of lack of organisation or the narrowness of the margin of profits. The organisation of the Ispahanis came in handy and on occasions the Government owed it 40, 50 and even 60 lakhs a day.

There has been talk of 4½ crores of rupees and some arithmetic was also indulged in by the ex-Minister for Food. Will it be too much of a trouble to multiply the number of maunds of rice and paddy purchased by the average price the honourable member for the municipalities of Murshidabad would recommend? He will then find where the 4½ crores have gone.

They want to know where the millions of tons of rice, the 4½ crores had brought in, disappeared. That, again, is a matter of simple arithmetic. Given the amount and the quantities of cereals it would fetch, the answer will be found in the stocks supplied to control shops, Chambers of Commerce, hospitals and their staffs, Government servants, free kitchens and shops opened by charitable men and societies and the large quantities dispatched, from time to time, to different parts of Bengal, which were short of the commodity. They will find that every grain of cereal is accounted for. I hold, Sir, that but for the flow maintained by the firm, conditions would have become worse. For any difference between quantities bought and delivered in Bengal, covered by the word "disappeared" I would ask the critics to refer to Sir Thomas Rutherford, the Bihar Governor, now ours, the Raja of Parlakimedi, Chief Minister of Orissa, who honours us with visits now and then and the mighty and all powerful Centre. As and

when the Opposition finds that what I am saying is correct, I hope that those who have been led to make wild and irresponsible statement, will join with me in offering our grateful thanks to M. M. Ispahani Ltd., for the great and meritorious services they have rendered to Bengal in its time of need. (Cries of "Oh! oh! from the Opposition benches.) (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: You have reason to be grateful to Ispahanis for having purchased for you the Standard Insurance Building at a cost of Rs. 8 lakhs.) The honourable member for Murshidabad who knows so much about the rice problem will perhaps be surprised to know that Ispahanis have not taken a single pie as commission that they had to draw from the Government.

The House was given another piece of information as if on great and unimpeachable authority, to the effect that the Ispahanis had raised the prices deliberately to swell the amount of their commission which was based on price. That, Sir, is a deliberate and mischievous misstatement. The commission is payable on maundage and not on price. What will surprise the House more is that the Ispahanis so far, have not submitted their bill for the commission and have received not a single pie on that account. Besides the commission, the Government of Bengal, owes to the firm of Ispahanis expenses for packing, handling the goods, gunnies and other incidental charges. What the actual amount on lakhs of maunds will be can be calculated easily.

It has been stated on the authority of the Chief Secretary to the Government of the Central Provinces that Ispahanis bought rice in those provinces at Rs. 9 to Rs. 10 per maund, in order to sell it at inflated prices in Bengal. I declare it on unimpeachable authority that this again is a concoction of the imagination of the honourable member's brain or a deliberate lapse of memory on the part of the Chief Secretary, if he has been reported correctly. I suspect the reporters, for, the Chief Secretary knows that whatever rice was purchased in the Central Provinces was given to the Government at purchase price and remained in the Central Provinces as the property of the Government. The honourable member for the municipalities of Murshidabad, stated it as a deliberate fact that a discrepancy of Rs. 60,000 was found in the account of the Ispahanis. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Up to June last.) That, Sir, is, again, a deliberate misstatement made by the honourable member, knowing it to be untrue. He has picked up the gauntlet thrown by the Chief Minister and agreed to establish his statement. He was supposed to meet the Minister the next day. It will be interesting to know whether he did so. The Chief Minister owes it to the House to let us know the result of the meeting.

Deliberate misstatements of a reprehensible character and facts divorced from the truth have been uttered in the House. Is it not, Sir, a disgraceful prostitution of the privilege and shelter offered by the Assembly? I ask them to come out and make these allegations outside the House. We shall then know how to deal with them. I feel certain that they will not do so.

(Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal: I would request you to keep quiet. You know the rules of procedure of this House.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: The honourable member for the University of Calcutta has been requested to satisfy himself in any manner he chooses, to check the accounts himself or through qualified accountants. He has, however, made vague and unfounded allegations and never laid any definite charges. He wants all the books and vouchers to be carted from the office of the Ispahanis to the offices of the Civil Supplies Directorate. Such a thing is not possible, as it will interfere with the good work being done. If he were to state six, 12 or 20 cases, he would like to have investigated, every facility will be given him to do so. If found guilty on any one single item then he will be justified in condemning the Ispahanis all along the line. Is it fair, Sir, to traduce the good name of a business house without satisfying yourself even *prima facie*, of the truth of your statements? I challenged every one of the statements of the honourable member for the municipalities of Murshidabad made the other day.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Today I demand it. He has no guts to challenge me.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: He had to modify one or two while I was speaking. He will have to eat his words when the honourable member for the University of Calcutta has made his investigation. I hope he will do so soon, for every hour, every minute counts. The Ispahanis may be looting us more and more from hour to hour. It is a duty he owes to the people of Bengal as well as to his own conscience to be up and doing. I hope he will not shirk it. Bengal expects that Syamaprasad Mookerjee shall do his duty.

It is a pity, Sir, that so much heat has been imported into a matter which, on all canons of decency in public affairs, should have been kept out of party politics. It was the one matter on which one and all in this House and outside it should have joined forces and worked together for the stricken people. But there are unfortunately, men among us who must make use of calamities brought upon us by Nature and Man, as a political handle and make capital out of the scarcity of food in Bengal to serve their political ends. When they cannot explain away their failures when in office, they must necessarily find fault with others and blame them for results of their own incompetence. When in office they directed their venom against the Central Government, the Governor of this Province and the permanent officials; now, that they are out of office, they have adopted the same tactics against the present Ministry. They want us to believe that things took a bad turn the moment they went out of office: They expect us to forget their 16 months of office, 16 months during which they held the destinies of the people of the Province in their hands,—which may aptly be described

as the period of incubation of the present crisis. All their pleadings and prevarications will not make the people of Bengal change their conviction that what we are facing today is the legacy left by them——

خود کوزه و خود کوزه گر و خود گل کوزه - خود زده صبوکش
خود بر سر آن کوزه خریدار برآمد ـ بشکشت و روان شد

[He Himself was the jar, Himself the maker of the jar and Himself the clay out of which the jar was made. Himself the drinker of the wine out of the jar;

And He Himself has come forward as a purchaser of the jar—He broke it and went away.]

Before God and man they stand condemned for the injury they have done to the people who deserved better of them. And now they have adopted tactics in the House and outside which do them no credit. They are forced to resort to cheap humour and indecent vulgarities—their bright references to the words *taktaposh* and "procurement" would prove their intellectual bankruptcy.

لگے اب منہہ چڑانے دیتے دیتے گالیاں صاحب
زبان بگڑی تو بگڑی تھی خبر لیجے دہن بگڑا

[You have now taken to making faces after having flung abuses till now: so far you had fouled your tongue. Beware lest you soil your mouth also.]

But, Sir, I am not hopeless about the Leader of the Opposition. In his heart of hearts he must realise that his colleagues are exploiting him. They are using his name and prestige. He fully appreciates that his present associations have made him incapable of service to his Muslim brothers because they do not want him and to his Hindu brothers because they know him. We may still hope that he would one day return to the *Siratul Mustaqeem.*

I have done, Sir. May I, with your permission, make an appeal to the Government? We are passing through tragic times. Some among us, like our poor brothers and sisters seeking food in the dustbins, are seeking politics in the tragedy. Between the 15th of October and the 15th of December, until the *aman* crop is gathered, the situation will become still more serious. Let the Government carry on without being influenced by what they are saying. Not they but the people of Bengal will judge them finally. Courage and determination to serve will carry them through. Succour must come and ships must be released even at the risk of delaying war operations. Feeding Bengal is a major war effort. Our patience has reached the breaking point. Let our rulers wake up. Not questions and answers in Parliament nor food debates here, but ships loaded with wheat, rice and any and every variety of edible goods must continue to dump their cargoes on the shores of Bengal until we are out of the wood.

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMAD: Sir, I was not in a mood to speak for other reasons, but I am sorry I have got to speak. The cat, I find, is out of the bag. The spokesman of the Government, the so-called spokesman of the Government, has spoken out that they favoured this province by taking office because they knew that the tragedy could not be averted. Now, Sir, as regards taking office, Sir John Herbert favoured these people. They were thrust on Bengal. Everybody knows that. Now comes forward the agent or the advocate of Messrs. Ispahani & Co. and tells us that though they knew that the tragedy in Bengal could not be averted they took up office so that the so-called Muslim League Ministry might see that thousands of Muslims died in this province. They took up office even when they knew that the tragedy could not be averted because they thought that it was much better that these people died under the shadow of the Muslim League Government. That is the thing I find. However, I leave that aside.

Let me come to the point. I will not take much time of the House because the thing has already been discussed and the facts and figures have been placed before this House. I will simply put a few questions to my friend the Minister for Civil Supplies and then ask him what he is going to do next. You all know the different statements which Mr. Suhrawardy issued after assuming office. I shall refer only to the statements issued on the 4th and 17th of May. He said that the prices then prevailing were speculative prices and that the shortage was not really shortage but was surplus. What was the result? On the assumption that there was surplus in the province Mr. Suhrawardy started an anti-hoarding drive. What was the result of the anti-hoarding drive? We do not know anything about it. Whether Mr. Suhrawardy could recover or unearth any hoards from under *taktaposhes* or whether he did not get anything, we do not know. It would only be befitting on the part of Government and of the Food Minister to issue a statement, a public statement, to this province so that people could know really what was the state of affairs. We can assume from the non-appearance of any statement that Mr. Suhrawardy found to his cost that there was no hoard and that he could not get at any surplus, or at least as much surplus as could be given out to the public. First of all, he left out Calcutta and Howrah and then included them in another drive. What has been the result of this drive we do not know yet. In season and out of season not only by the Opposition but also in the press and on the platform it has been said that Government have appointed Messrs. Ispahani & Co. as their sole agents for purchasing rice. We have heard something read out by the advocate of the Government and of the firm on the floor of this House. I am not attaching any importance to that statement because I want to hear what the Food Minister has to say about the position of food in this province. As a result of these two drives what was the stock that the Government got? After the two drives, what followed? Mr. Suhrawardy thought that there must be a price control. If there was no price control, then prices could not be brought down and the September session was coming. Therefore they must show that prices had been brought down. May I know one thing? Before introducing price control, he declared 18

districts as surplus districts. I do not know whether he has got any definite idea about the position of these districts. I can tell this House about my district and some of the districts that I know of. I do not know whether one of my friends, Mr. Mohsin Ali, who comes from Nadia has ever been consulted and what opinion he has given to the Ministry about Nadia. I do not know on what authority my friend Mr. Suhrawardy has declared Nadia as a surplus district. There are other members of the Assembly belonging to the Government party, and I do not know whether any of them said so to him, on the strength of which the rice agents of Government have been let loose there to purchase whatever *aus* paddy they can secure in my district. From Daulatpur thana in my subdivision more than one-half of the total yield of *aus* paddy has been purchased. When I last went to Kusthia I was told by the local peasants that they had sold out the major portion of their rice. I asked them what would they eat after a few days and the reply was that they could do nothing else for they thought that unless they sold at that price Government would take away their rice forcibly. Sir, this is what is happening in every district so far as rice purchase is concerned. In my humble opinion, Sir, the root cause of all these troubles lies in the policy adopted by Government, and what is that policy? The policy of Government is that whatever amount of paddy or rice can be had would be brought to Calcutta denuding the mufassal area of food——(At this stage the blue light was lit but the member wanted more than his usual time to develop his argument.).....so that the mufassal areas will starve. It is stated in season and out of season that war is on, and it is argued that the Opposition by crying down the Government hampers war action. Sir, I ask, who hampers war action? I think it is the Government's food policy that hampers war action. I would ask you, Sir, to imagine what would be the position in Bengal in case the much-advertised offensive for the reconquest of Burma is started. Lord Louis Mountbatten is establishing his headquarters at Delhi and, may be, the offensive will begin in October. If it takes place, and the Japanese retaliate and bomb Calcutta and the eastern districts of Bengal I do not know what will be our position. What food you have in stock in Calcutta I do not know, but in the event of a heavy bombing there will be dislocation and suspension of traffic when you will not be able to send any food to the mufassal areas. It is a fact that today people are dying by hundreds and thousands all over Bengal, but what will be the position if the traffic is suspended as a result of enemy bombing?

Then, Sir, I come to the question of price control. Sir, the price has now been fixed at Rs. 20 for a maund of rice, but can my friend, Mr. Suhrawardy, supply food to the people of Calcutta at Rs. 20 per maund? I also ask him, what is the price now prevailing in the mufassal? In Dacca the price of rice is Rs. 60 per maund and that of *atta* is Rs. 2 per seer. It is a downright lie that rice can be had at Rs. 20 per maund. I ask Sir Nazimuddin what is the price of rice in his own district of Dacca? Sir, that fellow over there is laughing: he is a Dacca man: let him say what is the price of rice in Dacca now. (Cries of "withdraw", "withdraw" from the Government party benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Shamsuddin Ahmed, you were addressing the Chair, and not addressing any member of this House, and therefore that expression applies to me (Laughter).

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Sir, I am sorry that I used the word "fellow". It was Mr. Salim whom I meant.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that expression should not be used.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: I am sorry, Sir, and I withdraw.

Sir, Mr. Salim, a member from Dacca, was laughing, but I ask him what is the present price of rice in his own district.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: He is a laughing boy.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Then, Sir, I come to the latest fiat of Mr. Suhrawardy.....(At this stage the member reached his time-limit, but asked for ten minutes more to develop his arguments.).....Sir, with regard to the latest fiat of Mr. Suhrawardy, he issued a statement which was published in the newspapers on the 23rd September. He has confiscated a huge stock of rice lying in a godown in Kumartuli, but he has not given out the name of the firm owning that rice. That rice did not belong to the firm of Shaw Wallace or of the Ispahanis but to the Shaha merchants——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, no; it belonged to Mr. Pulin Roy of Bhagyakul.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: My hon'ble friend has said that he had seized the stock and made it available to the public. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy has lately said in a statement that frankly speaking, the forces which are now in operation and the steps which are being taken by Government will solve the problem, and there will be no more cries of lack of foodgrains in Calcutta except by those who want to make a political capital out of it. That was the statement made by the Food Minister a few days ago, and he wanted to solve the problem in two or three days. I ask you, Sir, to consider whether the situation is now better or worse than before. The situation has become almost hopeless. Sir, whether as a Minister or as a leader of a party or as a public man statements should be made most cautiously, but I ask the House to consider with what levity Mr. Suhrawardy has been issuing statements on this grave question. He has given an assurance that there will be no want of food so far as Calcutta is concerned. As regards the mufassal he has said that the District Magistrates and the Subdivisional Officers have been instructed to get foodgrains from whatever sources they can and to see that there is a free flow of rice in the markets, and then comes the most interesting part of his statement where he says that subordinate officers like circle officers and police officers will have power to seize rice wherever they are hoarded and obtain orders of District Magistrates or Subdivisional Officers for its acquisition and for placing it on the market. This is the procedure, Sir, which my friend Mr. Suhrawardy, has adopted in getting stocks in Calcutta and also in the mufassal. Everybody knows that if the police are given this power

to freeze stocks of rice what will happen in Bengal. Already havoc has been created in the countryside; already as a result of the statements issued by the Hon'ble Minister and of the food drive, there is too much panic in the province, and whatever *aus* paddy the peasants got in the new harvest they have sold out. I have also received information that advances have already been made for the purchase of the next *aman* crop. It seems that on the one hand looters and plunderers are out to rob the villagers of their crop while on the other hand assurances are being given that the country may feel satisfied that measures are being taken that will relieve them from the present distress. And for criticising the actions of Government the Minister for Civil Supplies has described the Opposition as the Villain of the Peace. For the sake of argument I am prepared to admit that the Opposition may have overstated facts, may have given out exaggerated statements, but will the Hon'ble Minister for God's sake, for the sake of humanity, declare that he is going to feed the sixty million people of this province, because we have got to feed 60 millions of people of this province? As Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi said he wanted to save and he knew that there would be tragedy. Even knowing that, they stepped into office so that there might be a Muslim League Government and at least at the time of death they might give their blessings and say "you are dying under the shadow of a Muslim League Government". Before I sit down may I ask "Would this Muslim League members sing *hallelujah* of this Government seeing that before their eyes thousands are dying".

Sir, yesterday I had the misfortune of visiting the graveyard—one of my relations died. I had to go to the graveyard and I was informed that every day 50 to 60 persons are being buried in the Muslim graveyard. There is also the Hindu Satkar Samity. I do not know what is the number of Hindus dying every day, but we find in papers that 30, 40 or 50 deaths take place every day. We are not getting true accounts. As regards deaths in the mufassal, no statement has been made up till now. I have received reports from various districts that in single villages 20, 30 or 50 people die every day. I do not know what is going to happen because due to shortage of food people will lose their power of resistance and they will get malarial fever or other diseases and they will die by thousands. Sir, I do not know what will happen between the months of October and December.

Sir, it seems to me that this policy of centralisation of foodstuffs in Calcutta has got something to do with other commands from elsewhere. If this Ministry is at the beck and call of the powers above, whose commands they think they ought to carry out, I ask them that they must take upon themselves the responsibility of feeding the people. Either declare it a famine area or do whatever you like, but you must take the responsibility of feeding the people. There is no evasion of issues. I will not disturb my friend Mr. Suhrawardy. He may think that I am exaggerating things. I am simply asking him—and I hope he will reply on the floor of this House —how is he going to tackle the position in the province? Today, he knows the whole farce will be over. They have got office and they have got a majority in this House. But this will not save the situation in the province.

This party politics in this House will not save the situation. I want to know, the House wants to know, what Government is going to do to save the population from death and starvation which are facing them. I do not know what stocks they have got, what further statements they are going to issue as to the steps that have already been taken and the steps that they are going to take. If the situation is tackled in this manner, there is no hope for Bengal. Other provinces in India are laughing and some provinces have refused supplies. The Punjab peasants refused supplies because they say: "The Bengal Government takes food but gives no account. Why should we give food to Bengal? If the Bengal peasants had received the foodstuffs, then, of course, we would have given, but today the Bengal Government does not issue any statement." That is the reason why possibly we cannot receive any further supplies.

Sir, with these words I ask this Government and the Hon'ble Food Minister to declare before this House as to the definite measures they will adopt to save the population from starvation.

Mr. DEBI PROSAD KHAITAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a starving man can have no rhetoric and therefore I do not propose to regale the House by any rhetorical outburst. I must rather behave as a merchant that I am and place before this House some constructive suggestions whereby I feel that the problem can be solved to a certain extent at least. For this year our calculation has been, notwithstanding the speeches delivered by the officers of the Government of India, that there was a shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal for the year 1943-44 to the extent of about 20 lakh tons. I know not what, as a result of starvation and deaths, this amount of shortage today is. But there cannot be the slightest doubt according to our enquiries and estimates that there is not much foodstuffs left in this province but at the same time people have got to be fed. The only constructive suggestion that can be made is that the Government of Bengal must do their utmost in order to get foodstuffs from both outside India and from other provinces in India.

It is to a certain extent pleasing to note that yesterday's newspapers declared that 50,000 tons of wheat were coming from Australia. I would like to know whether the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Department of Civil Supplies has made representation to the Government of India that the whole of those 50,000 tons should be brought to Bengal. It would not be too much to ask the Government of India to give us the whole of that quantity. Besides the fact that Bengal is in the war zone, 50,000 tons would not be sufficient even for one month's feeding of the greater Calcutta. I do hope, Sir, that that quantity of 50,000 tons will be multiplied at least 20 times in order that the Government may be able to feed the population of this province. In addition to what we may get from outside and which we must get as soon as possible, it is necessary that the flow of supplies from other provinces must continue in the manner that it has done in the recent past. I hope, Sir, that Government is taking ample steps in order to see that there may be a continuous flow of foodgrains from other provinces.

Sir, I have read in the newspapers and have heard it said that Government want to introduce rationing in Calcutta. We have not been told what the

quantity of rationing per head per day would be. Dr. Aykroyd has given out his opinion and a very considered opinion—he is an expert nutritionist—that the minimum ration should be one pound of cereals per capita per day. I hope the Government of Bengal will not reduce that quantity. To that quantity of cereals, according to Dr. Aykroyd, again, has to be added pulses, sugar, *gur*, milk, ghee, groundnut, etc. Sir, if the Government of Bengal start rationing with a smaller quantity per capita per day, the result will be that people outside this province might think that the people of Bengal do not even need one pound per head per day and the further result would be that the flow of supplies that is coming and that has been arranged either from other provinces or from outside India may be curtailed. I hope, Sir, that Government will give serious thought to this question and not start with rationing at a smaller rate than one pound per capita per day of cereals alone. As regards groundnuts which I have mentioned, I am sure that the Government of Bengal is aware that the addition of groundnuts to rice makes it a nutritious food. But no statistics are available to show how much groundnuts have been imported from South India into this province and I hope that the Hon'ble Minister will enlighten this House on this question.

As regards the question as to what should be given to the consumers, I hope that when rationing is introduced, consumers will be allowed to take foodgrains instead of *atta*. There is a great likelihood that if consumers are forced to take atta alone, dust and other impurities may be mixed with it, and it would be absolutely impossible for the consumers to set apart dust from *atta*. It is therefore necessary that the consumers should be given the option of taking foodgrains instead of *atta* and among foodgrains also some consumers have got better taste for rice, some consumers have got better taste for *atta*. As in Bombay, I hope, Sir, that some amount of option will be given to the consumers to take up to a certain percentage wheat, and up to a certain percentage rice, so that the taste of the consumers may be met to a certain extent. This point has been recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee also which met in Delhi recently and I hope that Government will give due consideration to this question.

As regards the distribution of ration cards it has been found in the past that a large number of enumeration slips were not delivered or when enumeration slips were lost, it took about six weeks for the inhabitants to get duplicate enumeration slips. I hope, Sir, when ration cards are to be issued, they will be delivered at the houses of the inhabitants. It should not be necessary to issue enumeration slips at all, but that just as enumeration slips were delivered at the houses of the inhabitants, it should be possible to deliver the ration cards at the houses of the inhabitants, and there should be an easy procedure for original ration cards and also duplicates for lost ration cards, and additional ration cards for new arrivals and guests. Before rationing is introduced, it is our considered view that there should be at least two months' stock; otherwise we feel that rationing may become a failure. In order again to make equitable distribution successful, it is necessary that a non-official committee should be appointed on whose advice the Ministry should act, and further, following the example of Bombay, there should be a Food Council in which matters should be discussed from time to time on which

the public should be represented. Rationing should be carried through normal trade channels under Governmental regulations. There is a great panic in the public mind that Government want to do it only through Government's distributing centres and also use the public distress for political purposes. Rationing can never be successful without complete public support. Consumers also should be allowed to select shops from which they are to draw their rations. Government should state what steps they have taken to import additional groundnuts, *gur* and mustard oil, etc. In this connection I would draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the fact that by reason of the procedure adopted by the Government of the United Provinces it has become impossible for merchants and manufacturers in the United Provinces to export mustard oil to Bengal. The merchants and manufacturers there are selling mustard oil at the rate of Rs. 34 or Rs. 36 to the Government of United Provinces and the Government of United Provinces are selling that mustard oil back to the merchants and manufacturers at the rate of Rs. 41, whereas the price fixed in Bengal is Rs. 38 only. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will look into this question and take steps in regard to this.

Government should further state what steps they have taken to secure *atap* rice as the Hindu widows and some sections of the Hindu public do not take parboiled rice.

Consumers' goods, agricultural implements, precious metals, etc., should be made available to the agriculturists to induce them to part with such foodgrains as they have and the "Grow More Food Campaign" should be further encouraged by the grant of subsidies, etc. Government should at once find employments for those who used to work and have by force of circumstances become beggars. If time is lost, they will become habitual beggars and it will be a great strain on the province. Government should secure full information as to the amount of distress, starvation and death in all the districts and publish the information on the subject thus obtained. This is the only way in which the sympathy of the whole of India can be gained and the whole of India wants to know it regularly.

So far as we are aware no correct estimate has been prepared of the needs of the deficit areas. It is only on that basis that it can be ascertained how much should be drawn from the surplus areas within the province and how much should come from outside, i.e., from other provinces and abroad. One opinion strongly held is that Calcutta and other urban areas should be fed from outside sources and ought to be made the responsibility of the Government of India. Bengal being in the war zone, the necessity of the people of Bengal being contented as regards food cannot be stressed too much.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, আজকের সভার আলোচ্য বিষয়ে যোগদান করতে উঠে বাংলার দুঃখ কষ্টের চিত্রের বর্ণনা করবার প্রয়োজন হবে না। এঁটো পাতের জন্য কুকুরে মানুষে লড়াইয়ের কথা, জঞ্জাল ঘেঁটে ক্ষুন্নিবৃত্তির কথা, এ বানানো কথা, গল্পের কথা নয়; এর চেয়ে মর্ম্মন্তুদ ঘটনা আমার জেলায় গিয়ে দেখে এসেছিলাম। জগতের ইতিহাসে তা বোধ হয় এই প্রথম হবে। ছেলেদের বালি বিতরণ করার এক কেন্দ্রে এক মা তার মরা

ছেলেটিকে নিয়ে ২ দিন এসেছিল। সেই ছেলেটাকে দেখিয়ে তার ছেলের যে পাওনা বালি সেই বালি নিয়ে নিয়ে যেতো। তিন দিনের দিন সেই মরা ছেলে, যার গায়ে গন্ধ হয়েছিল, তাকে ফেলে দিতে হয়েছিল; তখন সে বললে আমাকে, বাবু ২ দিন ত ছেলে দেখিয়ে বালি খেয়ে খেয়ে প্রাণ রেখেছি, এখন কি করবো? কাজেই বাংলার খাদ্য-সমস্যা যে অবস্থায় এসেছে তার চিত্রের বর্ণনার প্রয়োজন হবে না। বিভিন্ন জেলার, বিশেষ করে বাঁকুড়া জেলার বাস্তব ক্ষেত্রের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে আমি যা দেখছি আমার তাতে বিশ্বাস হয়েছে যে বাংলার খাদ্য-সমস্যার সমাধান Government চায় না। আমি জোর গলায় বলতে পারি যে বাংলার বর্ত্তমান সরকার বাংলার এই যে খাদ্য-সমস্যা উপস্থিত হয়েছে তার সমাধান চায় না। খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমাধানের যে সমস্যা উপস্থিত হয়েছে তার দুটো আজ দিক রয়েছে: একটা সাহায্যের কাজ চালানো, আর একটা সরবরাহের দিক। Governmentএর পক্ষ থেকে সাহায্য দেওয়া সম্বন্ধে আমি আলোচনা করছি। খাদ্য-সমস্যায় সাহায্যের জন্য Government থেকে circular বেরিয়েছে August মাসে। অবশ্য এই circular সকল member দেখেছেন। সকলের আমাদের বিরাট দায়িত্ব আছে। জেলার Magistrateদের বলেছেন এই কথা যে, তুমি যে জেলার মালিক সেখানে মানুষ deteriorate করবার পর, তাদের জরাজীর্ণ হবার পর, তুমি এমন সব measures নেবে,—এই relief measures নেবে। যদি তাতে cover না করে তোমরা সব measures নেবে; বিশেষ সেখানে বিবেচনা করে দেখবে যে যাতে কোন রকম করে public at large deteriorate না করে। আজ সারা বাংলায় জরাজীর্ণের কথা নয়; মরণের তাণ্ডব নৃত্য চলেছে। কাজেই সেকথা প্রমাণ করবার প্রয়োজন হবে না। এই circular আর তার সঙ্গে সরকার পক্ষ থেকে এই মৃত্যুমুখী বাংলাকে বাঁচাবার প্রচেষ্টার কথা বলি শুনুন। এই circular গিয়েছে August মাসে। সারা বাংলার বুকে লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক মরে চলেছে, কিন্তু আজও দেখতে পাই কি না, এই বাঁকুড়া জেলার কথা বলছি—সেখানে সরকারী অন্নসত্র যা খোলা হবে, লঙ্গরখানা যা খোলা হবে তার পাঁয়তাড়া দেওয়া আজও শেষ হয়নি। আমি কালও পর্য্যন্ত দেশে ছিলাম। সেখানে দেখেছি, এখনও সরকারী পাঁয়তাড়া দেওয়া পর্য্যন্ত শেষ হয়নি। অথচ তারা সাহায্য দেবে কয়জনকে? একটা Unionএর ৩০০ লোককে পর্য্যন্ত সাহায্য দেবে। একটা Unionএ বাস করে গড়ে ৮,০০০ থেকে ১০,০০০। এই ৮,০০০ থেকে ১০,০০০এর লঙ্গরখানায় খেয়ে আসবে ৩০০—৪০০। আজও তার হিসাব চলেছে। তাই আমি বলতে যাচ্ছি যে সরকার এই সমস্যা সমাধান করতে কখনও চাননি। যদি সরকারের সত্য সত্যই এই circular হ'তো তাহলে এই circular ভিত্তি করে কেন District Magistrate সেখানে আজও কোন step নেয় নি? কিন্তু তা ত নয়। এর পিছনে সরকারের একটা গোপন নীতি আছে। (At this stage the member reached the time-limit.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: আমাকে আর ৪।৫ মিনিট দিন।

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: As you know, Sir, I have sent my name as one of the speakers and since I am not speaking, will you kindly allow him another five minutes?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. KAMAL KIRISHNA ROY: আমি বলতে চাচ্ছি, আজ সারা বাংলাতে আমার জোর গলায় বলতে চাচ্ছি এই কথা যে এই সরকার কোন রকম খাদ্য-সমস্যার সমাধান করতে চায় না, তার reliefএর কাজও পরিচালনা করতে চায় না। যদি সরকারের অন্তরে বাঙ্গালীকে, মরণোন্মুখ বাঙ্গালীকে, বাঁচাবার অনুমাত্র ইচ্ছা থাকতো তাহলে কেবল একটা Union-এর ৩০০ লোকের খাবার করতে, তার একটা সামান্য খিচুড়ী করতে এ পাঁয়তাড়া হ'তো না,—তাতে এই তিন মাস চলে যেতো না। এর পর আবার priority list; এখনও priority list চলছে; যখন সারা বাংলাতে মরণের মহোৎসব চলেছে তখনও priority list চলছে। স্থানীয় লোকের, কর্ম্মচারীদের দোষ নয়। তাঁরা বলেছেন, সব দেখছি, সব বুঝছি, Mr. Ray, জানি,—কিন্তু জিনিষ ত চাই। আমি আমার দেশের খাদ্য-সচিবকে বলবো, Suhrawardy সাহেবকে বলবো, তিনি যদি বাংলাকে সত্য সত্য বাঁচাতে চান তাহলে সেই গোপন নীতির কথা সারা বাংলাকে প্রকাশ করে বলুন। দেখি আমরা বেসরকারী থেকে এই বাংলাকে বাঁচাতে পারি কি না। তার প্রমাণ দেবো। বাঁকুড়ার প্রত্যেক পল্লীতে খাদ্য সরবরাহ করা আবশ্যক। আমার কাছে report রয়েছে; এই report Governmentএর review of scarcity situation of Bankura from 1915-40। তার মাঝখানে আমি quotation তুলে তুলে দেখাতে পারি যে Government প্রতি পদে পদে বলেছে এই বাঁকুড়া deficit district, এ famine-stricken district; তার গত ছয় বছরে বেশী ধান হয় নি। তারপরে তার দুর্ভিক্ষ এমনিতেই আসে। আর সেই বাঁকুড়া জেলাকে বলা হয়েছে কি না surplus district? তার থেকে আজ ধান কেনবার ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে। আমি সেই কথাই বলছিলাম। তার প্রমাণ এই দেখুন। যেমন ex-Minister সামসুদ্দীন সাহেব বল্লেন যে নদীয়াকে surplus ধরা হয়েছে তেমনি বাংলার বিভিন্ন জেলাকে আজ surplus ধরা হয়েছে তার কোন্ ভিত্তিতে? আমি গোপন নীতি জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই। বাঁকুড়ার কথা আমি ভাল জানি। তাই আমি বলতে চাচ্ছি যে শুধু surplus নয়, যে year bumper crop হয়, Government reportএ আছে, তাতেও 40 p.c.এর বেশী ধান হয় না। সেই বাঁকুড়া জেলাকে surplus বলে তার থেকে অগ্রিম ধান কেনবার ব্যবস্থা করেছেন। এই ধান কেনবার ব্যবস্থার ফলে আজকে ধান চাল হাজার হাজার মণ করে চলে আসছে। তাই আমি বলছিলাম খাদ্য সরবরাহের নীতি দেখে যে Government চান্ না। আমি জানি, আমি কর্ম্মক্ষেত্রের অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে জানি, আজ যদি বাঁকুড়া জেলাকে বাঁচতে হয়, তাহলে কি দরকার। যদি আজ সকল জায়গা থেকে, বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে, এক এক থানা থেকে কম পক্ষে তিন সপ্তাহের মাঝখানে আমরা আরো লক্ষ লক্ষ টাকা খরচ করতে না পারি তাহলে লক্ষের অধিক লোক মারা যাবে। যে জেলার ধানের অবস্থা এই রকম, খাদ্যের পরিস্থিতি এই রকম, সে জেলাকে যখন surplus district বলে তার কাছ থেকে ধান কেনবার ব্যবস্থা হয়, তখন আমার মনে হয় যে Government বাংলার খাদ্য-সমস্যা, বর্ত্তমান দুর্ভিক্ষের সমস্যার সমাধান করতে চান্ না। তার পশ্চাতে রয়ে গিয়েছে গোপন নীতি। তাই আমি বলবো যে এই গোপন নীতি যদি প্রকাশ করেন আজ বাংলাকে আমরা বাঁচাতে সক্ষম হতে পারি। এই বলে আমার বক্তব্য শেষ করছি।

Dr. GOVINDA CHANDRA BHOWMIK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, আমি মেদিনীপুরের দুরবস্থা সম্বন্ধে দুই একটা কথা বলবো। আমাদের এখানে, এই জেলায় বহু লোক মারা গিয়েছে।

আপনারা সকলেই জানেন সম্প্রতি সেখানে যে দুরবস্থা উপস্থিত হয়েছে তা বর্ণনা করা যায় না। এবারও এখানে প্রায় ৭০০ স্কোয়ার মাইল জায়গা বন্যায় ভেসে গিয়েছে। সুবর্ণরেখা এবং কাঁসাইয়ে বান হয়েছিল। Contai, ঘাটাল এবং তমলুকের বিভিন্ন জায়গায় ক্ষতি হয়েছে। একে লোকে খেতে পাচ্ছে না, এই দুরবস্থা উপস্থিত হয়েছে; তার ওপর সবচেয়ে দুঃখের কথা মেদিনীপুর জেলা থেকে, এখনও ঘাটাল থেকে বহু লক্ষ, বহু হাজার মণ ধান সরকারের agent-রা নিয়ে এসেছেন। নমুনা স্বরূপ আমি Speaker মহোদয়ের কাছে একটা ছবি পাঠিয়ে দিয়েছি; তিনি Suhrawardy সাহেবকে দেখাবেন। এটা photo. ঘাটালের বহু হাজার হাজার লোক না খেয়ে মরছে; এমন কি সেখানে ইঁদুর মেরেও খাচ্ছে। মেদিনীপুর সহরে একটা লোক খানিকটা মাংস খেয়েছে এবং হজম করতে না পেরে, তার ফলে suffocationএ মারা গিয়েছে। এই মেদিনীপুরের লোক অনেকে পাতা লতা খেয়ে আছে। '৭৬এর মন্বন্তরের ছবি পরিস্ফুটভাবে ফুটে উঠেছে সেখানে। সেখানে লোকের খাদ্য-সমস্যা সমাধানের ব্যবস্থা নাই। Governmentএর উচিত ছিল মেদিনীপুর, কাঁথি এবং তমলুক famine area declare করা। এই সব জায়গায় এক একটা Unionএর আমি হিসাব দিচ্ছি; Contai, যেখানে ১২ হাজার লোকের বাস, সেখানে ২০০ লোক মারা গিয়েছে; তমলুক, যেখানে ৮,০০০ লোকের বাস, সেখানে ৮০০ লোক মারা গিয়েছে। নন্দীপুর, যেখানে ৭,০০০ লোকের বাস, সেখানে ১,৬০০ লোক মারা গিয়েছে; এবং সমুদ্রের কাছে যে সকল Union ছিল সেখানে cholera, malaria এবং অন্যান্য রোগে একেবারে জনশূন্য হয়ে গিয়েছে। আমি এদিকে সরকারী কর্ম্মচারীদের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি। সেখানে কত জায়গা পতিত রয়েছে। সকলেই জানেন মেদিনীপুরের ধান বাংলার লোকে খায়; অথচ কাঁথী এবং তমলুক মহকুমায়, এই সব জায়গায়, লোক না খেয়ে মারা যাচ্ছে। তা ছাড়া সেখানে লোক malariaয় মারা যাচ্ছে, choleraয় মারা যাচ্ছে। এবং এই সব জায়গায় যথেষ্ট শস্য উৎপন্ন না হওয়ার জন্য আজ বাংলাদেশের বহু লোককে উপবাসী হয়ে থাকতে হবে। কাজেই আমি বলছি, সেখানে সব চেয়ে চরম অবস্থা। Governmentএর উচিত ছিল আগে থেকেই সেখানে famine declare করা; তাও করেন নি। আমরা চাল চেয়েছিলাম,—আর্য্য সমাজ, তাঁরা সেখানে লঙ্গরখানা খুলেছেন,—তার জন্য; কিন্তু তা পাওয়ার উপায় নেই। ৭৬টা Union তাতে ১১৬টা লঙ্গরখানা খুলেছেন; তার অবস্থা বর্ণনা করা যায় না। এক ছটাক চাল, কিছু সব্জী, ওলের ডাঁটা মিশানো আছে, এবং সে খেলে হয় dysentery হবে, না হয় cholera হবে। এবং choleraও বাড়ী বাড়ী দেখা দিয়েছে। আমি ৮ নং Unionএর খবর জানি, সেখানে মাত্র ২৫ সের চাল দেওয়া হয়; লোক উপস্থিত হয় হাজার। আপনারা কল্পনা করতে পারেন কি, ২৫ সের চালে কি করে এত লোককে দেওয়া যায়? যেভাবে লোক মরছে, এই দুই মাসের মধ্যে সেখানে প্রচুর পরিমাণে যদি খেতে না পায়, Government যদি শস্য stock না করেন তাহলে লোকে তো মারা যাবেই। মেদিনীপুর, সেটা surplus district, যারা অন্য জায়গাকে খাওয়ায় তারা যদি মারা গেল সেটা শুধু Governmentএর ক্ষতি নয়, বাংলাদেশের জনসাধারণের বিশেষ ক্ষতি হবে। আমি আরো আপনাদের দু'একটা কথা বলতে চাই: সেখানে quinine পাওয়া যাচ্ছে না, standard cloth নাই, বহু ছেলে অকালে মারা যাচ্ছে। আমি Governmentএর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করছি। এই Government এঁদের ব্যবস্থায় সম্পূর্ণ failure হয়েছেন, এবং সেখানে এই কয় মাস ধরে Governmentএর যে কাজ হচ্ছে তা অতি নিন্দনীয়, যা যে কোন সুসভ্য Governmentএর পক্ষে কলঙ্কের কথা।

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, I hope this photo will be made a part of the proceedings.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: What is the proof that the photo was taken recently and not two or three years before?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: It is based on the statement of an honourable member who can be relied upon and who is not like you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. If Dr. Bhowmick takes full responsibility for this photo showing these boats as carrying paddy, then it may form a part of the proceedings.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a point of order? Such photos have never found a place in the Hansard as a part of Parliamentary proceedings, and I hope you will not make a new convention by allowing it.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Sir, we would not expect such a picture to find a place in the Hansard because it is unthinkable for people there to die of starvation. The Government of England would not remain even for a day if a single man had died there for want of food.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: I do not want to say anything on the statement of Mr. Gupta, but what we want is your ruling, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what happens in British Parliament but there is no precedent in this House regarding any photo being made a part of the proceedings. It is extremely difficult for me to give any ruling here and now. I will consider this matter further and I will give my ruling later on.

Mr. HEMCHANDRA NASKAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have had enough of bungling and fuss about the burning problem of today that saps at the soul of hundreds of millions of this province. Discussions we have had enough, debates we have had enough; but what definite solution has as yet been arrived at? Starving millions are being everyday goaded to death and destruction, wails are being everyday heard in all the corners of this province of Bengal, corpses of hungry skeletons are being everyday found on the highways of this metropolis, children are being sold by their parents in the open markets, death-fights are being witnessed between men and animals by the sides of dustbins of the city—and the House which is entrusted with the life and safety of the unfortunate millions of this province is still engaged in wordy combats, critical criticisms and hateful party politics.

The Hon'ble Minister of Civil Supplies has persuaded himself to believe that the functioning of his onerous duty depends solely upon putting forward a dozen of reasons for the present food situation in Bengal and attempting to charm the members of this House with his self-contradictory colossal hoaxes from time to time. Sir, we are not here at this critical juncture of our province, prepared to get ourselves satisfied with the mere statements of reasons, sham as they are—without having the real solution, this province

is in immediate need of. Times without number we were made to hear of corruption and greed of stockists, hoarders and profiteers, who are held responsible for bringing about the present catastrophe. Who denies the fact? But if I am to believe that the above names are solely meant for the general populace, who have not drunk of the sweet poison of official favours and party politics, I must without hesitation declare that it is nothing but a shameless attempt to shirk the responsibility with which the present Ministry is entrusted.

The public as well as the members, who claim to have a grain of intelligence, have already come to know who are these profiteers that are solely responsible for the black market and its consequent havoc throughout the length and breadth of this province. The criminal is allowed to escape scotfree, as the saviour has taken up the thunderbolt of destruction to satisfy the interest of his self-agrandisement. I do not propose to enter upon the detailed discussion of the horried state of things to which the present Ministry has reduced this province. The point that I want to declare is that the policy which the present Ministry tried to introduce and give effect to has totally failed. During the last Food Drive the Minister of Civil Supplies has made a futile and ludicrous attempt to discover hidden stocks of foodgrains from under the *taktaposh* of each and every household and now again he is after controlling the prices of foodstuff, causing thereby overnight disappearance of the same from the markets. It is now as clear as broad daylight that both the methods were deliberately adopted to white-wash the black corner wherein lies the hidden secret of all this shameless bungling. The present reduction in the price of rice and other commodities is but a paper deal; the much advertised scheme of opening eight hundred Government stores in the city and suburbs is still hanging in the air, the guarantee of helping the poor cultivators with seedlings has already disappeared like bubble, the assurance of the *aus* and *aman* paddy has already proved meaningless jargon of words and all hopes of future crops are already lost, as the poor Scheduled Castes who constitute a major portion of the cultivating class of this province, being mercilessly driven out off their hearths and homes last year by the Defence of India Act, are now forced to die of sheer starvation by hundreds and thousands. The severe cold of the ensuing winter is about to extirpate the naked and almost naked poor and helpless population, especially those of remote villages of the province—and not a strip of cloth that may be obtained free of cost, is forthcoming from the high-sounding big schemes of the Minister of Civil Supplies to save them from winter exposure.

There is now no denial of the fact that Bengal today stands face to face before an unprecedented condition of misery and destruction. The sight of destitute and starving people in Calcutta, heart-rending as it is, is nothing compared to what is actually happening in distant towns and villages. Enough time has already been spent upon discussions and debate, questions and answers, retorts and rejoinders. Enough time has already been lost by the Minister of Civil Supplies in offering meaningless excuses and self-eulogising, in explaining big future schemes and in highly appreciating the

sympathetic attitude of the Punjab and the Delhi authority as well as that of the Council of the Viceroy.

Now, I appeal in the name of humanity to those responsible for this catastrophe and to the Ministry who have failed to bring about the correct solution, to co-operate with all the parties and sections and to devise such means as would be acceptable to all of them for the immediate succour of the dying millions of our province.

Mr. J. R. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, Sir honourable members have described the terrible situation in which this province is situated. Whether we call it famine or not, there is no doubt that there is widespread acute rice shortage and deaths are occurring daily from starvation. The position is bad enough in Calcutta, but we have reason to believe that the position is even worse in areas outside Calcutta.....(Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Opposition Benches.).....for example, in certain areas in East Bengal and in the Contai and Tamluk subdivisions of Midnapore. Figures of mortality from starvation in Calcutta have been published but so far as we are aware there have been no complete official figures published for deaths from starvation in other areas. We suggest that this should be done in order that the facts may be known. As regards Calcutta, relief camps with food, shelter and sanitation arrangements complete, have been prepared for the temporary accommodation of destitute people. We consider that it is most unsatisfactory that Government have taken little or no action to collect the destitute in Calcutta and remove them to these camps prior to repatriating them to their own villages. This is a point on which we feel very strongly—it is unfair to the citizens of Calcutta and the Corporation, that this state of affairs should be allowed to continue. We demand that Government take vigorous action immediately.

There has been a suggestion in Delhi circles that the situation has been over-dramatised. There is dire distress today in Bengal and I would like to record our view that the situation has not been over-dramatised.

In these circumstances of dire distress, as Mr. Khaitan has said, our primary need is for large supplies of rice and other foodgrains from outside the province. The Hon'ble Minister has been accused by a member of his own party of being immobile. We consider that the Hon'ble Minister has been mobile in the only way that matters in present circumstances, that is, in trying to secure supplies from outside the province. We applaud his efforts. We ask him to pursue them with all the energy he commands, and we ask that in these efforts he should receive the whole-hearted support of all sections of this House. (Hear, hear.)

The fact remains, Sir, that the quota of supplies of foodgrains allotted to this province from other provinces is inadequate. The quota fixed for Bengal as a result of the July Food Conference was totally inadequate. The Hon'ble Minister has since been able to supplement the quota, and there has been an awakening in the rest of India to Bengal's needs. Even if however the total surplus of the Punjab is made available which is not desirable, there is little prospect that Bengal's needs will be met. In our

view, Sir, the situation is such that it can only be met by imports of foodgrains from abroad, and we welcome the statement of the Secretary of State for India, that His Majesty's Government are giving such assistance as they can by way of facilitating the import of foodstuffs into India. We would urge that the Bengal Government should spare no efforts in pressing for imported supplies.

I would like to stress the responsibility of the Government of India in this matter. The conditions of acute food shortage prevailing in Bengal are due partly to natural calamities but mainly to war conditions. Bengal is today bearing the main burden of war conditions and it is up to the rest of India and the Empire, to come to her rescue. It is a tragedy that such conditions should be prevailing in a province which is not only an important military base in the war against Japan but also the hub of India's industrial war effort.

In our opinion, Sir, the Government of India must assume the responsibility for seeing that there is an equitable distribution of rice and other foodgrains as between the provinces. We do not wish to enter into recriminations, but there should be no more conferences conducted in the manner of the July Conference at which provincial representatives were asked to go back to their provinces and declare what they could spare. Also this group deprecates any attempts by the Central Government, Provincial Governments or railways to undertake propaganda in the press to exonerate themselves from their responsibilites. It may be a fact that the Government of India do not have the executive machinery to ensure an equitable distribution of supplies as between provinces. There is only one answer to that: the machinery must be created. The Food Department in Delhi must be strengthened by the acquisition of scientific, and trade experts and administrators trained in food administration, and here I think I am voicing the opinion of the other provinces as well as Bengal.

I have said that the primary essential in the present situation is to secure large supplies from outside the province. The second essential is that there should be speedy and equitable distribution of these supplies. Supplies of wheat are now arriving in Calcutta and the position in Calcutta is showing some improvement. We welcome the Hon'ble Minister's assurances that wheat products are now being distributed direct in mufassal areas, but we must state that so far there has been no evidence that wheat or wheat products are arriving in anything like appreciable quantities in mufassal areas. We should like to be assured that the wheat supplies which are arriving in this province are flowing as speedily as possible through the correct channels to the distressed areas. We would like to know that the problem of internal transport has been tackled by Government and that there will be no delays owing to transport difficulties. In the present situation a great deal will depend upon Government being able to unload supplies with the utmost speed in distressed areas. It will be necessary to distribute wheat direct on a large scale in the districts, and we would like to know that in that distribution full use will be made of *chukki* facilities in the

districts. Have Government made any arrangements for making *chukki* or other machinery for grinding wheat available in the districts?

There has been considerable criticism of Government's *aus* purchase scheme. There is no doubt in our minds that the primary object of Government's rice policy should be to secure control of supplies. The *aus* purchase scheme has attempted to do two things at the same time, namely, to secure control of supplies and to impose price control. It may well be argued that control of supplies should have preceded imposition of price control, but in our view Government had little option in face of the fantastic prices that were prevailing, prices far beyond the reach of large sections of the population. Government must go on with their price control scheme. They cannot, in our opinion, go back on it but events have shown that Government must secure control of supplies, and we would suggest to Government that prices should now be stabilised at the existing level for some time until Government have sufficient supplies under their control to enable them to effect a further reduction in prices.

There is one point to which I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister. In Bihar, rice has been graded into medium and coarse rice, and separate controlled rates have been fixed for the two grades. It appears to us that the effect of fixing only one rate for all qualities of rice is that the finer qualities are withheld from the market and only the lowest qualities are available. We would therefore urge Government to take similar action as the Government of Bihar and fix separate prices for the two grades of coarse and medium rice. I understand that samples of the two grades have been sent by the Government of Bihar to the Government of Bengal.

The question of the appointment of the firm of Messrs. Ispahani as sole Government agents during the free trade period has been made an issue by the Opposition, and members of the Opposition have made many allegations against that firm. It is a fact that several other firms were approached to take the agency but these firms were unable to accept because they felt that their organisations were inadequate to undertake the work (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Question.) and in fact, they suggested that Messrs. Ispahani was the only firm with the requisite organisation. In normal circumstances we would have agreed that it was certainly not desirable that one firm should be appointed as sole Government agents, and we trust that Government have this point in view in regard to their *aman* crop policy. We agree, Sir, with the Hon'ble the Chief Minister that the criticism against the firm of Messrs. Ispahani is unfair and is inspired by political motives. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Why not make an enquiry?)

In present circumstances we must concentrate on the immediate situation, but I would like to say a few words with regard to policy. In our view Government must have a definite policy and must work to it. There must be an end to constant changing of plans, staff and trial and error methods. The Government's *aus* purchase scheme is admittedly only a temporary scheme and much more comprehensive plan will be necessary for the *aman* crop. We would only emphasise that Government must settle their plan

and their rice policy at the earliest possible date, and would also say that the Government of India should stand behind the Provincial Government to aid and implement that policy both financially and otherwise. It is not for us to suggest the details of that plan and policy. That is a matter for Government and their experts, but I would suggest that the following points are obvious necessities:—

In the first place, Government must secure control of rice supplies which means that Government must pursue a bold purchasing policy and endeavour to build up their own stocks in each district. The object should be to secure 100 per cent. control over as large as possible a proportion of the available supplies. In so far as the trade is allowed to function, Government must control and direct the channels of the trade, and I would commend to the Hon'ble Minister's attention the provisions of the Assam and Madras Rice Mills Licensing Orders. The rice mills provide an obvious bottle-neck through which supplies to urban areas can be controlled.

In the second place, Government must have an adequate organisation. There must be an end of the sorry tale of a handful of men grappling with a problem with which they cannot hope to cope and one by one collapsing under the strain. The Hon'ble Minister has, we know, a strong constitution, but we can forecast the same fate for him if his organisation is not rapidly expanded. My honourable friend Mr. Kennedy has put forward certain suggestions on this question, and I do not wish to go into them further except to stress the necessity for training in food administration. Food administration requires high standards of efficiency, skill and integrity, and in our opinion, Sir, these standards will only be secured by intensive training of the personnel of the organisation in food administration.

In the third place Government must undertake the responsibility for equitable distribution of available supplies and for the rationing in urban areas. Government must have their own distribution and transport organisation or at least control of distribution and transport, and in addition they will have to have a large rationing organisation imbued with the spirit of public service.

Honourable members of the Opposition have offered their co-operation to Government. We would most earnestly implore them to make that co-operation effective. We would suggest that it is necessary that all sections of this House should combine to urge Bengal's case for assistance, and we would suggest that it does not help that case to make general allegations of maladministration.

Bengal has unfortunately a considerable leeway to make up in this matter of food control. It is a fact that in Bengal the problems are more difficult and complex than in any other part of India, and the Hon'ble Minister has already referred to his terrible heritage. The fact remains that we are only making a beginning in this matter of control of food supply and distribution, whilst other provinces have their schemes in operation. We are satisfied, however, that this Government and their staff have made a beginning in the right direction and are sparing no effort both to meet

the immediate situation and to put Bengal's food administration on an efficient basis. We are, therefore, opposed to the motions moved by the Opposition.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an accursed Government that calls itself civilised and fails in its primary duty of finding food for its people. But a Government which not only fails in that primary duty but goes to the length of assaulting people in distress, whose only fault is that they had come to ventilate their grievances, is not only accursed but thrice accursed. Sir, the present Government has not only failed in this duty, but has tried to cover its guilt by promulgating press censorship of which even the most uncivilised Government and barbarous system of administration would feel ashamed. Over and above that, they are shutting all avenues to the people of coming to their representatives and through them to ventilate their grievances. May the curses of 60 millions of Bengalis fall on the cursed heads of the Ministry and their supporters for their inhuman treatment towards their own countrymen!

My esteemed friend Mr. Walker—for the sake of brevity I will call him Walker No. 2, with spectacles—has in the course of his speech referred to a certain heritage. I believe, Sir, he has referred to the legacy which we are alleged to have left for our heirs and descendants. I think, Sir, it is necessary that I should say a few words regarding this legacy.

Sir, it is no use bringing forward charges and counter charges, recriminations, statements and counter statements. Let us take our stand on solid facts.

Now, Sir, what is the position today? Bengal is in the grip of a famine. There is not merely an absolute scarcity of rice, but total disapperance of rice from the province. Only a short while ago, there was a dispute as to the rate at which rice was selling at Dacca. That question does not arise, because rice is not available and is not being sold at all, so that nobody can say at what rate rice is being sold there. This is true not merely of Dacca but practically the whole of this province.

Now, Sir, there is no rice. Is that a legacy from the past Government? (A voice from the Ministerial benches: Yes.) We left office at the end of March, 1943. (A voice from the Opposition benches: With surplus.) (A voice from the Ministerial benches: Question.) The present Government took office on the 24th April. Mr. Suhrawardy, as soon as he got into office with his exuberant energy and enthusiasm, studied the whole question; he went thoroughly into the papers and after having made a complete survey of the province he made the following statement on the 4th May: "The Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies is of opinion that the prices now prevailing are purely speculative and bear no relation whatsoever to the true stock position in the province as a whole". Mark the words "the prices now prevailing bear no relation whatsoever to the true stock position in the province as a whole". This means, Sir, if the English language has got any meaning that the stocks were not short, that the prices are speculative and are much higher than they ought to be on the basis of the stock position.

Now, Sir, Mr. Suhrawardy goes on to say "There has been a bumper crop both in our province as well as in Assam and other provinces, and stocks are already on the move to Bengal. While the prospects of the next *aus* crop are distinctly good, large quantities of wheat, maize, *bajra*, etc., in excess of Bengal's needs are now being received from the Government of India". The Hon'ble Minister, says the statement, "is convinced that any difficulty this year can be fully met from the carry over of the previous crop and as a result of the steps being taken to rationalise consumption and to popularise the increased use of substitute foodgrains as well as reduction in the consumptoin due to the high price level"—I stop for a moment to say that high prices at least produced the good effect that people ate less than they used to do before—"the public may rest assured that there is no cause to fear any ultimate shortage of foodgrains". Now, Sir, read this carefully, read this dispassionately and you will be at once convinced that the Minister after a thorough survey of the situation, after having studied the situation had come to the conclusion that there was not only no shortage but a surplus and any possible cause for complaint must have been defects in the distribution, but which they were going to remedy. Where then was the legacy? What we left was a very nice inheritance to our descendants. Our descendants should have been grateful to us for the ample bumper crop, the carry over from the previous year and many more things. There was no doubt in the mind of the Civil Supplies Minister that the situation was such that the large quantities of foodstuffs that were coming from all over India would not only meet our difficulties but would also leave something like a surplus behind.

On the 8th of May the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies issued another statement. I need not read it. It is a very long statement. I am stating only the gist. I have got the statement and if I am contradicted I shall read it. Mr. Suhrawardy now here says "We have got a tremendous task before us because our predecessors in office have left us a huge deficit". That is not his complaint. He does not refer in a single sentence, or even in a single word, to the legacy of which we hear so much. As a matter of fact, I am coming to the next point and this will make the point of legacy clear.

My esteemed friend, Mr. Walker (No. 2), made a most violent speech when we were in office. He thumped the table and said that the Government must be condemned for the high prices that were ruling. What were those high prices? The prices ranged between Rs. 15 and Rs. 20 per maund. What is the price today? Rs. 80. (Interruption.) I never spoke a single word during the whole of last week. I expect at any rate to be allowed to speak. (Interruption from Ministerial Benches.) "You take all the money you can from Bengal. Let me have at least the opportunity to say a few words." (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: It is your habit to take money.) My friend Mr. Suhrawardy says that prices are speculative. I do not know if my friends of the European Group know that there is a system of Hindu Philosophy, in which everything in the world is *maya*—illusion. There is nothing like reality but all is illusion. If you see a cobra before you it is

maya. It may be you see a cobra but it is only *maya* and nothing else. Possibly, it is nothing but a rope. If you see a bucketful of water before you it is *maya*. Consider that it is a maund of rice and it will be a maund of rice. The price is speculative, the price of rice is Rs. 80 a maund, but it is not a reality, it is *maya*, it is illusion. If the price is Rs. 80 per maund, consider that it is not Rs. 80 it is only Rs. 4 a maund. My European friends do not know the difference between this and that. Let me read an interesting sentence. The Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies is of opinion that the prices now prevailing are purely speculative. Yes, Sir, the famine is purely speculative. What nonsense? People are dying and yet they say, don't believe all that. It is *maya*. It is nothing. It is an illusion. People are not dying. They are being reborn, and what you see as death is no death.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: They are only spiting Government.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: We have got 4 statements. The Secretary of State has said with all the weight of his authority that there is scarcity because people have overfed themselves. Then Mr. Conran-Smith has said that it is over-dramatisation. Mr. Suhrawardy says that people are dying no doubt but they are dying from exposure and cold and not from starvation. The Hon'ble Chief Minister winds up his beautiful series of sayings by declaring that all this is propaganda. I say all this is *maya*, illusion. There is no distress in the country, no steps need be taken (Interruption).

May I go on, Sir?

(Interruption.)

The position therefore is, so far as scarcity is concerned, that it is not a legacy because we did not leave any legacy of scarcity. We left a surplus. As regards the high prices it is not a legacy because when we left the price was Rs. 15 per maund and you have made it Rs. 80 a maund. Therefore that is not legacy. (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: That is all *maya*.)

I come to the next point. I would not have referred to the firm of Messrs. Ispahani & Company had it not been for the fact that my esteemed friend Mr. Walker (No. 2) had said that Mr. Ispahani had done a great service to Bengal. (Cries of "No, no" from the European Benches.) You said that no other firm was forthcoming because they had not the agency to carry out. (Cries of 'Ah, ah" from the Ministerial Benches.) It is not a question of "Ah, ah". I know more about it. I know all about it. I know more about it than any man in the House. I was the Chief Minister when Mr. Ispahani came into the picture against our wishes and I will tell the House what actually happened. My friends will bear me out when I say that it was in April, 1942, when the rice denial policy was undertaken that one day—I had told the story so often and it had not been contradicted —Sir John Herbert, the then Governor of Bengal, sent for the Joint Secretary in the Commerce Department and asked him to remove the surplus rice from Bakarganj, Khulna and Midnapore. Sir John did not consult his Ministers. We made a grievance of it. We made enquiries and at first the Joint

Secretary put forward his defence, what my friend, Mr. Walker, had said that no other firm with agencies all over the province was available and he had no other alternative than to give it to Mr. Ispahani.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: And that too to a *benamdar*, Mr. Mirza Ali Akbar. It was in the name of Mirza Ali Akbar.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: On enquiry we found that what the Joint Secretary had done was to telephone to half a dozen firms to whom he did not disclose the Government terms of the contract but asked, "Are you willing to purchase rice from denial areas?" They said, "We cannot accept the offer unless we know the terms of the contract". Thus having got half a dozen refusals, he asked Ahmed Ispahani to accept the offer and twenty lakhs of rupees was handed over to Mr. Ispahani without even a scrap of paper being taken from him as a document for the payment of that money. The statement, therefore, that Ispahanis were selected because other suitable firms were not available, is not true, and I say that Mr. Ispahani was selected, not because others were not available, but because Government was bent upon giving the contract to the Ispahanis. (Loud noise from the Government benches)——(Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Who was in office then?)——I was in office then but all this was done behind the back of the Ministry (Loud noise again from the Government party benches as well as the Opposition benches)——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must inform the House that the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition when making speeches should have uninterrupted audience of the House.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: The other side is making more noise, Sir.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I ask you, Sir, to consider if it is of any use speaking at all in the midst of these running comments.

Mr. SPEAKER: You go on, Mr. Fazlul Huq.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, I do not for a moment raise the question whether the Ispahanis should be made the sole agents or not. Possibly if I had been given the option I might have selected that very firm myself. There might have been objections on the score of sole agencies. I did not object to the firm of Ispahani being given the contract; my objection was not to the sole agency being given to one firm, but it was to the manner in which Mr. Ispahani and other agents had been allowed to go about in the mufassal disturbing the economic condition of the people and purchasing rice and selling it here——

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: That is a lie.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Is "lie" a Parliamentary expression, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a Parliamentary expression but I have not heard it.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, we want a thorough public enquiry which will reveal facts and the world at large will know whether I am telling a lie or that greatest of all liars is telling a lie.

Sir, I will say what happened. They went to Khulna and told the people, "let us have your rice; if you do not sell it to us you will not be able to sell it to anybody else". The poor village people who were in want of money sold their rice at Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 per maund.....(Loud noise from the Government party benches.).....Not only that, Sir, but I have cases before me one of which is pending in the High Court and other in the civil courts. As regards the merits of those cases I will say nothing now, but that was a matter in which the advantage of the sole agency system was being utilised by Government by allowing the firm to carry on their sole agency. Stocks were requisitioned under rule 75(*a*) of the Defence of India Rules, but as soon as the stocks were requisitioned Government, without caring to give the affected parties any compensation, handed over the stock to Mirza Ali Akbar. Here is one writ of Mandamus issued by the High Court in the matter of a man named Man Singh of 177, Harrison Road. These are the facts. The order is dated 17th of June, 1943, purported to have been issued by Mr. B. K. Acharya, Joint Regional Controller of Civil Supplies, requisitioning 150 bags of rice belonging to that firm and he is purported to have acted under rule 75(*a*) of the Defence of India Rules. The said order does not state whether any compensation has to be paid for such requisition. This is the manner in which requisitions are being made by Government. Mirza Ali Akbar of 35, Ezra Street, has been appointed the agent to remove rice unconditionally and when he gets rice he deals in it in any way he likes; he has purchased rice at Rs. 8 from the mufassal and he has sold it to Government at Rs. 32. Let there be an enquiry and I will prove it.

Then, Sir, I would refer to the case of Birendra Kumar Mitra which is now *sub judice*, and which I am defending. I will not refer to the facts of the case as it is *sub judice*, but to certain other incidents which had taken place. Birendra Babu has a shop at 22, Canning Street, and the police seized 480 maunds of rice but gave a receipt of 450 maunds. When he protested, they refused to give any receipt and assaulted him, and after having got this rice it was handed over to Mirza Ali Akbar, being the sole agent. This is a procedure, Sir, to which we must certainly object. It is in this way, Sir, that by exercising the power given under the Defence of India Rules, Government gets hold of stocks of rice in certain men's godowns and gives the same to the favourite agents. Is this justice? Is this the way in which the rights and liberties of the people are to be protected? Is this the way to requisition stocks of rice to be handed over to favourite agents of Government? My European friends do not know what is happening behind the curtain. I give them credit for their integrity of purpose and honesty of conviction. I do not say that they are supporting the Ministry because there is a Ministry in office. They do not know that corruption is reigning rampant in the Department of Civil Supplies. I appeal to them to support our prayer for an enquiry

which will enable all of us to know what is actually going on in the name of justice and good Government. Now, Sir, what is wrong there if we want that there should be an accounting, and there should be an open enquiry. It is admitted, Sir, that the Ispahanis have received crores of rupees as advances. Whether it is 4½ crores or two crores or Rs. 2 does not matter but anyone who receives public money and spends it is bound to render some account of it.....(Cries of "Why don't you go to the firm of the Ispahanis and see the papers for yourselves?").....If that be so, why did the Government bring up the Budget here? Why could they not say that members of this House could have gone to the Writers Buildings' and inspected the Budget? It is an acknowledged rule that all persons dealing with public money must place their accounts before the public for inspection. Even the Marchioness of Linlithgow publishes her accounts of receipts and expenditure of relief societies in order to inspire the confidence of the public. If their accounts are in order (افرا ئه حساب پاکست از محاسبه چه باک), as my friends will understand. It is no reflection on the firm of the Ispahanis, it is no reflection whatsoever if we demand an enquiry and that we want accounts from them. Since so much mud has been thrown at that firm let them publish their accounts and say "we have not merely served you but we have saved your province in this way". If that be done the voice of criticism will at once be hushed.

I come now, Sir, to my next point. Sir, my friends of the European group have appealed to all sections of the House for co-operation. We of the Opposition most heartily echo that appeal, but, Sir, it must be understood that co-operation breeds co-operation just as confidence breeds confidence. Whoever wants co-operation must deserve it. A Government which is not merely a sectional Government but which carries on its administration only to feather its own nest and to fill the pockets of their friends and relations and supporters does not deserve any co-operation from any section of the House. Sir, if there is an open enquiry you will find that shops have been taken away and given to their supporter friends. There are instances in which shops have been given to many of the Opposition members who are present in this House in order to induce them to join the Ministerial Party. That is not the kind of Government that deserves co-operation from anybody. Be honest to yourself, specially at a time of crisis like this, be honest and we extend you our hand of co-operation. Talk of co-operation! The streets of Calcutta would have been littered with the dry bones had not the public come forward generously in order to open free kitchens. Of the five thousand and odd free kitchens now working in Bengal not even five have been opened at the instance of Mr. Suhrawardy. You talk of co-operation! (The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Ha, ha!) No question of "ha", "ha" like a monkey.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, is that Parliamentary?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I do not say monkey, it is a donkey. (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: You are one.)

I want to say one word regarding the mufassal. It will not do..... (Interruption from Government benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Fazlul Huq, I would request you not to listen to these things but to go on.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I am not; I am going to finish.

Now, Sir, it is not Calcutta that matters so much as the mufassal. My friends of the European group have rightly realised that the position in the mufassal is much worse than in Calcutta. Here you can get a morsel of food somehow or other but in the mufassal not only is there no rice, no supply of rice, but it is impossible for people to get not merely a morsel of food but even a drop of what is sometimes called gruel. That is, the state of things in mufassal is ten times worse than it is in Calcutta. It will not do to think of Calcutta and greater Calcutta. You must think of the whole of Bengal, specially of the mufassal where the resources of the people are very limited.

Sir, I make one suggestion. There are over 5,000 union boards in Bengal. Let the Government supply enough rice to each union board in order that it may fairly be distributed among the individuals. It is no use doing something for the town of Calcutta. You must not forget the mufassal.

Sir, I was reading this morning the speech of Mr. Suhrawardy delivered on the 10th of March on the special motions regarding food. His concluding words, Sir, I adopt as my own. He addressed those words to me and it is the mercy of Providence that it is my privilege to address those words to him this afternoon. This is what he said to me and this is what I say to him:

"Before I sit down I make a final appeal to the House. I beg it to realise the very serious nature of the situation." Remember, Sir, this was when rice was selling at Rs. 16 per maund and people were not dying. "It is not that we intend to make political capital out of the criminal conduct of the Ministry but things have come to such a pass, the province is already so near chaos and disorder, dangers ahead are so considerable, the Ministry is so thoroughly incompetent and worse"—I repeat it thousand times—"that if the honourable members have any regard for the future and better Government of this province, if they have any concern for good order, good management of this province, if they have any concern for the very lives of the people, if they wish to save the unhappy masses from starvation and death, then I would appeal to them particularly those who sit in serried ranks behind the Ministry, to support our motion and record their opinion that this Ministry has definitely failed to do its duty by the people. How long, I beg of the House to consider, are we to bear the dead weight of this Ministry, bankrupt and sterile? How long are personal reasons, the prospect of a few jobs, promises of patronage, benefits already received, being received and due to be received going to keep you from doing your duty by the

people? How long are those who say that they want an efficient and reliable administration, an administration..... ." I need not read the whole thing. It will be found on page 48 of the proceedings.

Now, Sir, I hope my European friends will excuse me if in conclusion I refer to the fact that although this Ministry during these six months has brought this province to such a pass, it is receiving unstinted support not merely from my friends opposite but from the European group. The support given to this Ministry by the European group and by my friends opposite is psychologically the same, although the approach is slightly different. The European group support this Ministry because it is a Ministry of their foundlings and they know that this Ministry is so very amenable to their advice that they would be ill advised to throw this Ministry out of office. They are acting in the apprehension that once this Ministry falls, there is no knowing what catastrophe may happen. Some members of the Opposition may again sit in office there and may create chaos where there is peace, order and good government. Sir, my friends of the European group are acting on the principle that the devil I know is better than the devil I do not know. That is their apprehension and therefore they are supporting this Ministry. My friends opposite are also supporting this Ministry for the same psychological reason because in this Ministry they find all their hopes for the future, it is through this Ministry that they can amass fabulous wealth far above the greed and avarice of men .....(A voice from the Government benches: All has been exhausted.) There still remains enough which will last our friends of the Ministerialist party for 14 generations up and down. (Laughter.)

Therefore they are going to support Government at any cost. One member says, "What does it matter if people are dying? We must support the Ministry". Another member says, "What does it matter if people are dying? Bengal is overpopulated and there should be some reduction in the population." In their case it is indifference. In the case of my European friends it is ignorance, but the result is the same. We know, Sir, that we are in the minority, but, Sir, we believe that although we have not got the power to carry out the mandate which we have received from our constituencies, the whole of the province is behind us in this demand of the country. (Cries of "question" from the Ministerialist benches.)

Sir, I conclude by throwing out this open challenge to Mr. Suhrawardy "this Government is guilty of criminal misappropriation; therefore, you avoid an open enquiry. This Government is guilty of nothing short of theft and plunder; therefore you are opposing every demand for rendering of accounts by the firm of Messrs. Ispahani and Company." I demand that there should be an open enquiry not by way of any want of confidence in that firm but to restore public confidence in the firm. I demand that accounts should be laid before the public, so that the public may know how four and half crores of rupees that have been placed in their hands have been accounted for. We have got to remember that by the action of this Government crores of rupees are the deficit of

the Government at the present moment. I do not know if they will ever be able to repay the debt. We have every right to know why is it that this debt has been incurred, why is it that this has happened. In their interests, if not for anything else, I hope that they will rise up to the height of the occasion to clear up all the charges that have been made and which I have made on behalf of the Opposition that they are thieves and profiteers and plunderers unless they can account for the money that has come into their hands.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: After 40 minutes of histrionic bathos and at the end of a debate when all Muslim members of the House are anxious to get away in order to break their fast, I feel, Sir, that it is not possible for me to do justice to the debate which has lasted well over two days and in course of which many charges have been flung at the Ministry and at the same time many constructive suggestions have been made which I should like to have dealt with. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: By Mr. Walker!) Yes, by Mr. Walker and Mr. Kennedy. Not a single constructive suggestion was made by a single member of the Opposition. Sir, I refuse to be agitated by the taunts of the members of the Opposition or even by the abuses and vituperations of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, which (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Give us food and stop the stunt) it is his privilege to fling about in the House. Sir, I am very serious today. Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee's speech was a political stunt. For me the present situation (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: is a political stunt!) is something very serious, something very deadly. The Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition has said that the curses of 60 million people will fall on our heads. May I say one thing, Sir, that this is a very serious matter? I leave it to my God to judge between the late Chief Minister and myself, between Mr. Fazlul Huq and myself as to who has tried his best to do his duty by the people of the province. I shall leave it at that and if the curses are to fall on any one's head, they will fall on the heads of the persons whom God will find guilty. I do not wish the late Chief Minister any such evil thing. I leave it to him to wish such evil things for his other fellow beings.

Sir, I will deal with the speech of Dr. Mookerjee at greater length than others, because most of the other people who have spoken have repeated in a garbled manner the speech with which he initiated the debate. It is stated that when there was actual shortage, I estimated that there was no shortage, and that I have wasted five months' time declaring that there was no shortage. Now, Sir, I have already given an answer. This is an old accusation and I need repeat the old reply that what I stated was that insistence on shortage would not help anyone. This does not mean that I did not admit that there was a shortage; on the other hand it presupposes a shortage. But it really does not matter what I said or what I did not say. What matters is that I took all possible steps that Government could take to meet the situation, to meet the shortage, that I took all possible steps which Government could take to impress upon the Government of India that it had to come to the assistance of

Bengal, because there was a serious deficiency in this province and I took all possible steps for the purpose of procuring grains from outside. It is said, Sir, that when we had the food drive why did I not stop movements of foodgrains from the village to the towns. If that had been done at that moment, you would have witnessed much earlier and over a considerable period of time the spectacle which we have just passed through. Calcutta and other consuming centres, all of them, would have been devoid of rice. Deficit areas would have had no rice. It was necessary that trade should continue to flow; and anyone who prevents the flow of trade without complete responsibility for distribution creates conditions which may cause very serious damage to the public.

The next point which has been raised is that no steps have been taken to send adequate supplies to deficit areas. On the other hand, Sir, I claim that we have taken those steps which the late Government did not take. During the time of the late Government nothing was sent to the deficit areas except to the cyclone-struck areas of Midnapore and the 24-Parganas. During our time we have been sending foodgrains to deficit areas, we have picked up foodgrains from surplus areas and sent them to the deficit areas and it is thus that for 5 months these deficit areas have been fed and maintained.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: With what result? (Interruption.)

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: True, certain people have died as the figures will show. (Interruption.) (A VOICE: "Figures be blowed".) But many many more have been saved. For the sake of the middle classes, we have run cheap grain shops and secured them supplies which may well cause us a loss running to 3 crores of rupees. This at any rate ought to bring home to this House that cheap grain shops have been opened everywhere for the benefit of the people. (Sj. MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Has any shop been opened at Bankura?)

There is a further point to which honourable members have constantly referred under a misapprehension. There has been no removal from actually deficit areas of rice which Government have purchased. Now, Sir, I made it clear in my opening speech that there is no intention on the part of Government to remove rice from the deficit areas. I have made it clear in my opening speech that rice will remain there for the purposes of meeting the needs of *khichuri* kitchens, relief kitchens and cheap grain shops and not a single maund of rice has gone out of the deficit areas to the surplus areas.

A certain friend of mine has produced a photo of certain boats. I take it that in some portion of Midnapore that photograph was taken, although it was a photograph which might have been taken anywhere, but there is nothing wrong with the photograph of boats. I think Dr. Syama-prasad Mookerjee surely knows—but he does not know the latest development—that we are sending regularly by boats grains to Midnapore and that we have doubled the number of boats recently. I do not know what these boats are. I wish to make it clear that no boats are taking

away any rice from the distressed areas in Midnapore. There are certain areas in Midnapore which had a certain amount of stock of surplus foodgrains like Chandrakona. That might be a different matter. Grain comes from certain parts of Midnapore to Calcutta because that is the direct route; but at the same time grain is going in an unending stream from Calcutta to the cyclone-affected areas. It is not possible normally to transfer foodgrain from the surplus area of Midnapore to the deficit area of Midnapore without bringing it first to Calcutta.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: What is the total quantity sent?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: A considerable amount. I may tell the House since I was informed that the conditions in Midnapore were deteriorating, I have redoubled the quota to the cyclone-affected areas and we are now sending double the number of boats to Midnapore. We are doing all this for Midnapore.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the Hon'ble Minister give us figures of the requirements of the district and what has been sent?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Don't interrupt the Hon'ble Minister, please.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: It has been asked why the Bengal Ministry agreed to make the reduction in the basic quota. We never agreed to it.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: It was done in spite of you.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: It is not a question of "in spite of you". At the Conference, every province was asked to declare its surplus and to declare its deficit. Thereafter the Government of India attempted to make up the deficits from the surpluses and allotted certain quotas to the various provinces. The amount allotted to Bengal was miserable and I protested most emphatically against it. I am fighting against it since then and this coupled with the change in the attitude of the Government of India has resulted in more and more foodgrains being allotted to Bengal, than was done under the basic quota. This was my plain duty, and I am thankful that to some extent my efforts have been crowned with success.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not your efforts, but "The Statesman's" pleadings.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee has again raised the bogey of profiteering with the wheat from the Punjab. It is a very great pity that he has done so, because it creates a kind of confusion that there are people even here who think that the Bengal Government might have made certain profits. I have made it quite clear to the Government of India, to the Punjab Government and to the public at large what the position actually is. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: But they refused to be convinced.) No, the Punjab Government is convinced.

At the same time the Punjab Government says that it would like to know where the leakage actually is. This time Sirdar Baldeo Singh is convinced. You will see that he has made a fresh statement. He is convinced that the Bengal Government is not profiteering. I have pointed out to them that in the beginning the Bengal Government did make certain profits out of the wheat and wheat products and it was due to the fact that a considerable amount of wheat was promised to us, about 30,000 tons of wheat a month. The mills said that they could not take up, handle and store all the 30,000 tons of wheat. A considerable amount of wheat products also was promised to us. We had therefore to make arrangements and to make provision in our figures for handling charges, for storing, for removing and sending it outside. We never got the promised amount of wheat. Instead of 30,000 tons of wheat, we received in June 16,000 tons and in July only 18,000 tons and we never had to incur these handling and storing and reloading charges. We had also made provision for sending wheat products to the various districts of Bengal which would have been done had we had the wheat which was promised. We intended that Government would stand the entire cost and would sell wheat products in any part of Bengal for 6 annas a seer, and this would have entailed a considerable amount of loss. We never had sufficient wheat and wheat products and so that money was saved. We then brought down the price of *atta* from 8 to 7 annas per seer. Even then sufficient wheat was not coming. When I went to the Punjab I made it clear to the Punjab Government that the first thing I would do on my return to Calcutta would be to examine the price and to bring it down still further. I came back and I brought down the price to 6 annas. Now the position stands like this: If the promised quota of wheat comes as it is now expected to come from the Punjab and from the United Provinces—and I see no reason why the wheat quota should not come—if it comes then the entire profit made on wheat will be wiped off and we shall probably have to pay from the provincial revenues Rs. 6 lakhs. That is the position as it stands, and I think the honourable members ought to accept the position and not create further confusion in the matter. I have no doubt that the Punjab Government also will accept that position.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: They have not as yet.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: They will. It is no use talking like this. It is true and I am prepared to admit that in the beginning it was largely due to our own inexperience. We had never milled wheat before and we did not know how much it was going to cost, how much wheat we had to put in, and how much wheat products would come out. We had worked on calculations from the figures supplied by the Wheat Advisory Committee itself. This was done on what we call expert advice and this was the result. We had not just imagined everything. It was all done on a certain basis. Now we have sufficient experience: we have examined the figures at various stages of the transactions and have reduced the prices.

Now, Sir, the next point is with regard to Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd. I hoped that I would not be any more required to refer to that firm and that the replies we had and the clear exposition made on the floor of this House by the Chief Minister would have quietened the Opposition, but it seems it has not had any effect as the Leader of the Opposition is still bent on making political capital out of it.

Now, Sir, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee wishes to know this: what is the total amount of the payments and advances that have been made to Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd. Let me make it clear to you, Sir, that no advances have been made to the Ispahanis at all. Moneys have been paid to them for purchases after the purchases had been made with their own money.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not true.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: That is absolutely correct. No money had been paid to them until vouchers had been placed before us and until we were satisfied that the purchases had been made. As to what the figures are, I have not got them: it may be 4½ crores or 5 crores, of that I am not quite certain. But whatever they are, the honourable members opposite—I mean Dr. Sanyal and Dr. Mookerjee who have the clearest knowledge of my Department and know what is going on there—know perfectly well how much money has been paid; and it is not necessary for me to say anything more. (Interruptions from the Opposition, and a Voice: It is not a clear answer.) I accept all your figures, but the fact remains that nothing has been paid against purchases which have not been made and even up till now the Bengal Government stands indebted to the firm of Messrs. Ispahani. (Cries of "Oh, oh" from the Opposition Benches. Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We want an enquiry into the actual payments that have been made to this firm.)

Then, Sir, as regards the agreement, that is an agreement which has been entered into by the firm with the Government and we have not the slightest doubt that it will be to our advantage. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: When was it signed?) It is not necessary for me to say when it was signed, but the agreement was signed and that agreement is open to inspection by every member of this House: the date on which it was signed, the place where it was signed and the persons who signed it, and so on and so on: The particulars of the transactions cannot be placed before the House or before the public for the simple reason that these are the figures which are the private concerns of a particular firm. But you can come and see them. It was not necessary for me to make that offer, but I did make that offer, and I do still stick to that offer, that you can come and examine the books and see the accounts of Messrs. Ispahani, Ltd., and stop this controversy once and for all. If you find anything wrong and bring it to the notice of the Government, Government will surely look into it. You have not yet accepted that offer, but I really request, I beseech you to accept this offer to come to the office of the firm and see all things for yourselves: you can bring your own accountants and see all the vouchers and papers. I do say on behalf of the Ministry

that I am most anxious to probe into and rectify any wrong which may have been done by the Ispahanis, but merely making charges—baseless, incorrect charges—merely shouting that "we want an enquiry" into these false allegations which are without any substance will not do. You examine the books, find out the substance and be satisfied, but don't make this sort of false allegations. Dr. Sanyal said the other day that there was a case of defalcation of Rs. 60,000 against the Ispahanis——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I did not say, defalcation, but discrepancy.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, I called for the accountant and he said, "It is not a fact"——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I stand by what I have said and it is for the accountant to prove that it is not a fact.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: That was why the accountant was sent for. He said that there was only one instance when a person who had already sold rice to the Director of Civil Supplies went and sold to the firm of Ispahanis the same rice at Rs. 5 more. The Ispahanis bought rice because it was cheap, when the market price was something like Rs. 19; the man got Rs. 7,000 more, which has been debited to the Ispahanis.

Then there are small shortages, a maund here, five seers there, ten seers at another place, leading to losses of Rs. 5 here, Rs. 10, there, etc. On the other hand there were cases of increases also, because, as it must be clear to everybody, when large despatches are sent, when you send out ten thousand maunds of rice, there is always the likelihood of a shortage of a maund here or an increase of a maund at another place.

Then, Sir, I wish to say most emphatically that there is no political connection between the firm and the Ministry. There is no denying the fact that so far as the Ispahanis and the Ispahani Brothers are concerned, they are good Muslim Leaguers, as, I consider, the vast majority of the people of Bengal and the vast majority of the Muslims of India are Muslim Leaguers. They are Muslim Leaguers in the same manner in which the honourable the ex-Chief Minister of the Opposition would like to be a Muslim Leaguer himself. We know that we are Muslim Leaguers, and we pride ourselves in the fact that we are Muslim Leaguers, but I can definitely say that there is no political connection between the firm and the Ministry——(Loud noise from the Opposition benches and cries of "hear", "hear", from the Government party benches)——Sir, so far as the accounts of the firm are concerned, they have been thoroughly examined and every pice has been accounted for. It has often been stated that the Ispahanis are supposed to have sold rice to the Government of Bengal. That, I think, is the main point of attack of the Opposition against the Ministry. Let me point out that the Ispahanis have not sold a grain of

rice to the Government of Bengal except what was taken from them or sold by them before they were appointed agents. Government bought the entire stock at that time at the actual price of their own purchases.

Now, Sir, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee has received telegrams from unsuspecting District Magistrates and Subdivisional Officers that relief kitchens ought to be established in those places. The position is this: The Bengal Relief Committee sent to these unsuspecting officers telegrams asking them whether they wanted relief kitchens to be established there. Sir, it is quite clear that under the orders of Government relief kitchens are to be established in all parts of Bengal, and these relief kitchens must have supplies. It is not that supplies are not there, but if the Bengal Relief Committee wishes to open up kitchens, it will obviously be of great help if instead of drawing upon local supplies which are set apart for the existing relief kitchens, they would supplement it with their own supplies. Already there were 2,200 relief kitchens established within a short period and the number has been increased to 4,000 now, and I am sure these 4,000 relief kitchens are being run adequately. Therefore, Sir, if the Bengal Relief Committee can run relief kitchens only with our supplies, I do not know what is the particular advantage gained by handing our supplies to them, if they are just enough for our own needs. (Loud noise from the Opposition benches and cries of "On paper only")——Sir, we have gone out of our way to make an effort which Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee may not be able to acknowledge or appreciate because he is making political capital out of it. Sir, we have given the utmost possible help to Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee's Bengal Relief Committee, and have made it possible for him to dispense relief in his own name, and if they come to these places for the purpose of giving relief we are always prepared to give the utmost possible help which Government can give. (Loud applause from the Government party benches.) I do not care, Sir, whether he utilises this assistance for political purposes or he does not or whether he uses it to stand forth as the champion of the people of Bengal. It will be my duty to help him or anybody else even he be my bitterest foe. If he comes to relieve the distressed people of Bengal, it will be my duty to assist him to the utmost possible extent.

Sir, there are many things I should like to discuss. I shall conclude by saying one word about Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee's last statement about co-operation.

Mr. ASIMUDDIN AHMED: On a point of order, Sir. আমাদের সময় হয়ে গিয়েছে। মাননীয় মন্ত্রীমহাশয় আর কতক্ষণ বলিবেন ?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I shall take two minutes more.

Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee has offered co-operation and I am most anxious to accept that hand of co-operation. Let him come with clean hands and let him——(Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: You are a murderer and you say "Come with clean hands"! (He says that I am a murderer

and so it is quite clear that he does not offer his hand of co-operation. After all, that offer of co-operation is nothing else but a stunt. His leader also talked about co-operation but abused us up hill and down dale in the same breath. Is that the method of offering co-operation? If you want to give co-operation, come along. We shall sit down with you and try together to solve the problem of Bengal and try our best, but come with a clean heart, come with a real desire to serve and to co-operate. Do not come merely for show, do not come with black and dark minds that you are coming to talk to murderers or to those with whom you really do not want co-operation. If you come with a clean heart——(Interruptions and loud noise from the Opposition benches.) If you continue to behave like that, it is no use speaking further.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, may I make a suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister——(Cries of "sit down", "sit down" from Government benches).

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Basu, please sit down. You must remember that this is the month of *Ramzan* and we have got to break our fast at 6-32 punctually.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that this Assembly is of opinion that——

(*i*) the statement made by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies, in the Assembly on the 15th instant is extremely disappointing and unsatisfactory, particularly in so far as it does not indicate Government's immediate intention as yet to undertake the maintenance of food supply for the entire population specially the rural population and the middle classes, during the emergency, and in so far as it shows the absence of any comprehensive scheme for the equitable distribution of all available stock of foodgrains, from within or from without the province, with the introduction of necessary rationing schemes for urban areas;

(*ii*) immediate steps should be taken to isolate the big consuming areas like Calcutta and Howrah with their industrial suburbs, Chittagong, Dacca, Narayanganj, all places of military concentration and aerodrome construction and big evacuees' camps from the rest of Bengal, with a view to maintain the supplies in such areas with the imports from outside and to retain the supplies in rural Bengal for local consumption as far as practicable, supplementing the same with surpluses of the foodgrains from outside Bengal to relieve specially deficit areas;

(*iii*) immediate steps should be taken to prevent the purchases of *aus* paddy and rice as also the coming *aman* crop by big traders from outside, whether Government agents or others at competitive prices, and to prohibit the export of such foodgrains to the bigger consuming centres isolated as above;

(*iv*) immediate steps should be taken to reorganise the village food committees set up during the Food Drive and to organise union and village relief committees with adequate representation of all progressive parties and organisations and to give effect to a comprehensive scheme of relief for all classes determined in consultation with the leaders of public opinion.

was then put and a division taken with the following results:—

AYES—88.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Acharyya Choudhury, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Edbar, Mr. Upendranath.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Muhammad Solaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukherjee, Mr. B.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nandy, Maharaja Srischandra, of Cossimbazar.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sanker.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Pramanik, Mr. Tarinicharan.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Roy, Shib Shekhareswar, Kumar.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—128.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakeem, Mr. (Khulna).
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.

Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Raschid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Aftab Ali, Mr.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Bell-Hart, Miss P. B.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monomohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Emdadul Haque, Kazi.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhut Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Golam Sarwar Hosaini, Mr. Shah Syed.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hamilton, Mr. K. A.
Hasanuzzaman, Khan Sahib Maulvi Md.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hirtzel, Mr. M. A. F.
Hodge, Mr. H. R.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leisk, Mr. John.
McPherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr. (Bogra).
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Miles, Mr. C. W.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mohsin Ali, Mr. Md.
Morgan, Mr. G., C.I.E.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mozammel Huq, Maulvi Md.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Powell, Mr. J. A.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Smyth-Osbourne, Mr. D. G.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Steven, Mr. J. W. R.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.
Zillur Rahman Shah Chowdhury, Maulvi.

The Ayes being 88 and the Noes 128, the motion was lost.

The motion of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee that this Assembly is of opinion that the statement of the Civil Supplies Minister on the food situation is utterly disappointing and unsatisfactory. The policy pursued

by the Ministry with regard to procurement and distribution of food-grains and also in the matter of increasing production within the province has been completely unplanned and ineffective and has been responsible for a gradual deterioration of the situation leading to appalling famine conditions now prevalent in all parts of the province. Its latest action in promulgating price control of rice without making suitable provision for supplies has intensely aggravated the misery of the people. The Ministry has failed to discharge the elementary responsibility of any civilised Government by its failure to save human lives and to procure for the people essential commodities for their bare existence, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas that this Assembly is of opinion that the Provincial Government has bungled the food situation in the following, among other ways, namely,—

(*i*) by not making equitable distribution of the foodstuffs imported into and purchased within Bengal;

(*ii*) by allowing removal of train loads of rice from Bengal during the month of August last;

(*iii*) by appointing agents to purchase *aus* paddy in several districts of the province;

(*iv*) by not giving due effect to the policy of price control;

(*v*) by allowing the traders to withhold the sale of rice in their stock at controlled prices; and

(*vi*) by not checking bribery, corruption and nepotism in the matter of food supply,

was then put and lost.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6-30 p.m. till 2-15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 28th September, 1943, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Tuesday, the 28th September, 1943, at 2-15 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 13 Hon'ble Ministers and 175 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Sale of kerosene oil and rice in Serajganj.

*71. **Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) who is in charge of issuing permits for selling kerosene oil in the town of Serajganj, Pabna, for the last 8 months;

(*b*) the names of the persons to whom such permits were issued during the period;

(*c*) the date of issuing such permits to them;

(*d*) the number of tins allowed in each permit; and

(*e*) whether any permit has been issued to any Government servant for selling kerosene oil and rice?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): (*a*) The Subdivisional Supply Officer under the supervision of the Subdivisional Officer.

(*b*) to (*d*) A statement is laid on the Table.

(*e*) No.

Statement referred to in reply to clauses (b) to (d) of starred question No. 71.

Name of permit holder.	Number of tins allowed in each permit per month.	Date of issue.
1. Abdali Ali and others	10	....
2. Gobindra Chandra Das	3	....
3. Brajanath Das	6	....
4. Bhabani Charan Paul	6	....
5. Tabarak Hossain Khan	10	....
6. Hare Krishna Roy	6	....
7. Khedu Ram Mistri	10	....
8. Abdus Sobhan	3	....

	Name of permit holder.	Number of tins allowed in each permit per month.	Date of issue.
9.	Bipin Chandra Das	5	28th January, 1943.
10.	Kedar Nath Das	10	....
11.	Mokbel Hossain Shaikh	5	....
12.	Bhabesh Chandra Sarkar	10	....
13.	Suraj Ali Khan	10	....
14.	Gendu Munshi	3	....
15.	Md. Idu Shaikh	7	....
16.	Maulvi Abdus Salam	10	....
17.	Arabali Shaikh	8	....
18.	Pralay Kumar Bose	10	....
19.	Shyam Chandra Dey	6	13th March, 1943.
20.	Mangal Chandra Ghosh	4	....
21.	Samad Ali Shaikh	5	....
22.	Umichand Sarma	7	....
23.	Hajee Jamaluddin	10	....
24.	Khedanram Satyanarayan	15	30th March, 1943.
25.	Imam Bax Shaikh	10	5th April, 1943.
26.	Bherudam Sarma	7	Ditto.
27.	Secretary, Central Co-operative Bank ..	50	Ditto.
28.	Niranjan Kumar Saha	10	Ditto.
29.	Monoranjan Aich	5	14th April, 1943.
30.	Lutfar Rahman	30	17th April, 1943.
31.	Behadur Shaikh	5	14th April, 1943.
32.	Chunilal Sarma	25	....
33.	Matilal Bose	5	....
34.	Fazlur Rahman	5	....
35.	Abdul Jabbar Siddique	40	....
36.	Md. Aktar Hossain	15	....
37.	Mangal Chandra Basak	15	....
38.	Baduli Sarkar	20	....
39.	Sidheswar Banerjee	10	13th July, 1943.
40.	Kazemuddin Sheikh	5	....
41.	Azad Uddin Chaudhury	15	....
42.	Debes Prasad Raha	15	....
43.	Makhan Lal Dutta	10	....
44.	Khondkar Md. Ilias	10	10th May, 1943.
45.	Md. Abdul Mannan Bhuyan	10	....
46.	Menajyem Hossain Khan	10	....
47.	Md. Afzal Hossain Ahmed	5	....
48.	Suresh Chandra Saha	5	....
49.	Krishan Chandra Das	10	....
50.	Sudhangsu Sekhar Chakravarty	7	....
51.	Abdul Rahman Talukdar	10	3rd March, 1943.
52.	Golam Maola Sheikh	10	....
53.	Rafat Uddin Sarkar	25	....
54.	Trailakya Nath Das	5	....
55.	Amritalal Chaudhary	15	....
56.	Md. Jamayedul Haque Khan	15	....

	Name of permit holder.	Number of tins allowed in each permit per month.	Date of issue.
57.	Maulvi Mansur Alam Khan	30	....
58.	Md. Esahaque Uddin	10	....
59.	Abdulla Sarkar	7	....
60.	Kuran Sheikh	7	....
61.	Jogesh Chandra Datta	8	..
62.	Sarba Nanda Dutta ..	15	....
63.	Apurba Kumar Bose	10	....
64.	Bherudam Sarma	7	....
65.	Suresh Chandra Dutta	10	....
66.	Digam Khan .. .	30	....
67.	Hakim Moshk Alam	5	....
68.	Md. Marfat Ali	15	...
69.	Abu Bakkar Mahmood . ..	15	...
70.	Sadat Hossain Talukdar	15	...
71.	Md. Mazaharul Islam . .	15	....
72.	Kefatulla Sheikh . ..	5	....
73.	Md. Ali Hossain . ..	10	....
74.	Md. Abdus Salam	20	....
75.	Beni Madhab Sarker	20	....
76.	Md. Soleman Shaikh	7	....
77.	Syed Ahmed	10	....
78.	Fakir Mahmood Sheikh .. .	15	....
79.	Bholanath Karmakar ..	10	....
80.	Gendu Mistri	8	..
81.	Harekrishna Das	5	..
82.	Kalipada Das .. .	5	...
83.	A. G. Chakravarty . .	15	.
84.	Moksed Ali Bepari	10	....
85.	Jadunath Bose .	15	....
86.	Girindra Nath Saha . ..	10	.
87.	Surendra Mohan Ghose .. .	5	....
88.	Hriday Nath Basak .	5	....
89.	Girindra Chandra Bose . ..	10	...
90.	Md. Bazruk Ali	10	...
91.	Sitaram Bhujawalla .	25	...
92.	Md. Hossain Mia .. .	10	....
93.	Golam Kader Chaudhury	10	...
94.	Kazemmuddin Shaikh	5	.. .
95.	Bidhu Bhusan Roy .. .	15	....
96.	Kazem Sardar	10	....
97.	Phani Bhusan Talukdar	10	....
98.	Sasadhar Paul	10	....

Casualties by military and police firing.

*72. **Mr. PRATUL CHANDRA CANGULI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing, district by district, since August 7, 1942, up to date how many persons have been—

(*i*) killed and wounded as the result of police and military firing;

(*ii*) arrested under the Defence of India Act and Rules;

(*iii*) arrested under the Indian Penal Code in connection with the political movement;

(*iv*) convicted under the Defence of India Act and Rules and Indian Penal Code in connection with the political movement; and

(*v*) detained in jail as security prisoner under the Defence of India Rules for political reasons?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing, district by district, the amount of collective fines imposed on the inhabitants mentioning the areas?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) Figures as available are given in the statement laid on the Table. These figures exclude casualties from military firing, on which information is not available.

(*ii*), (*iv*) and (*v*) Figures as available are given in the statement laid on the Table.

(*iii*) Details are not available and their collection would involve an expenditure of time and labour which I am not prepared to sanction.

(*b*) I refer the honourable member to the reply given to starred question No. 38 on the 17th September, 1943.

Statement referred to in reply to clause (a)(i) of starred question No. 72.

Districts.	7th August-30th November, 1942.	
	Killed.	Injured.
Burdwan	..	2
Birbhum	2	17
Bankura	..	..
Midnapore	45	90
Hooghly	..	..
Howrah	..	..
24-Parganas	..	3
Calcutta	20	234
Nadia	..	..
Murshidabad	..	..
Jessore	..	..
Khulna	..	..
Rajshahi	..	..
Dinajpur	4	2
Jalpaiguri	..	..
Darjeeling	4	20
Rangpur	..	..
Bogra	..	..
Pabna	..	..
Malda	..	1
Dacca	12	40
Mymensingh	..	..
Faridpur	1	42
Bakarganj	..	2
Tippera	..	..
Noakhali	..	..
Chittagong	..	..
Total	88	453

Statement referred to in reply to clause (a)(ii), (iv) and (v) of starred question No. 72.

Districts.	1st August, 1942-31st January, 1943. Arrested.	Convicted.	Detained.
Burdwan	17	8	25
Birbhum	17	144	9
Bankura	57	12	6
Midnapore	28	34	95
Hooghly	81	..	153
Howrah	31	17	13
24-Parganas	..	22	105
Calcutta	185	.	295
Nadia	9	..	18
Murshidabad	35	4	42
Jessore	3	2	12
Khulna	18	87	18
Rajshahi	..	8	79
Dinajpur	51	6	40
Jalpaiguri	5	5	6
Darjeeling	..	.	..
Rangpur	3	..	20
Bogra	16	8	23
Pabna	12	..	20
Malda	1	9	..
Dacca	42	43	76
Mymensingh	62	25	63
Faridpur	24	31	39
Bakarganj	54	134	110
Tippera	32	95	4
Noakhali	13	..	22
Chittagong	89	..	17
Total ..	885	694	1,310
Figures from 1st February-15th August, 1943 (not available district by district) ..	244	124	305
Grand Total (1st August, 1942-15th August, 1943)	1,129	818	1,615

Mr. P. BANERJI: Will the honourable member be pleased to state why the figures of casualties from military firing are not available?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government have no information with regard to accidents due to military firing.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Is it not the primary duty of Government to maintain all information relating to casualties from military or police firing?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir, but it would involve a lot of time and labour to collate these statistics.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Will the honourable member be pleased to tell the House whether it is not a fact that in the ordinary course this information is maintained by Government?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Not in the ordinary course. Cases have got to be looked into and reports called for from various thanas in the districts. It would take a lot of time and labour and expenditure of money which would not be commensurate with the result obtained.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Is it not a fact that these figures are given in the Administration Reports issued every year and is it difficult to obtain these figures in the ordinary course?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, difficult in the ordinary course.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the honourable member be pleased to tell us who has supplied the information about persons detained in jail as security prisoners under the Defence of India Rules?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: From the departments of Government the figures have been collected.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Are these figures given by District Magistrates?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The Home Department collects figures from various districts.

Dr. SHARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJEE: Will the honourable member be pleased to state if any family allowance had been given to the families of those who had been killed by firing?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Number of people killed and injured by the military.

*73. **Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to lay a statement on the Table showing for the year 1941-42—

(*a*) the number of people that were shot dead by the military in the city of Calcutta; and

(*b*) the number of people who were injured by the police and military all over Bengal?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): Government are not in possession of any statistics as asked for. To compile them would entail an expenditure of time, labour and money which Government regret they cannot see their way to undertake.

Alleged issue of certain instructions by Additional Divisional Commissioner, Presidency and Burdwan Divisions, regarding relief.

*74. **Khan Bahadur ALFAZUDDIN AHMED:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether

it is a fact that the Additional Commissioner, Presidency and Burdwan Divisions, for cyclone and flood relief, has recently issued instructions to the local authorities—

(*i*) for giving preferential treatment to the middle class *bhadraloks* in the matter of relief;

(*ii*) for not giving blankets to the poorer classes; and

(*iii*) for giving large sums on loan to the middle class people?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether such instructions had the approval of Government?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) No such instructions were issued by the Additional Commissioner, Presidency and Burdwan Divisions, whose post ceased to exist from the 1st April, 1943.

(*b*) Does not arise.

Recommendations of Sir William Stampe regarding food production.

***75. Mr. M. A. F. HIRTZEL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Sir William Stampe has recommended certain irrigation schemes to the Bengal Government with the object of increasing food production?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give particulars of those schemes?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by Government to implement the irrigation schemes recommended by Sir William Stampe?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*) and (*b*) If the questions refer to schemes which Sir William Stampe desired this Province to initiate, the answers are as follows:—

Sir William Stampe suggested to this Government that, in order to help the "Grow More Food" campaign, the Irrigation Department might consider the advisability of giving irrigation facilities to certain areas now lying fallow for growing *rabi* crops by pumping water from suitably placed rivers or *bhils*. He suggested that the method successfully followed in the United Provinces might be tried, which is to irrigate suitably placed fertile lands with water pumped by electrically-driven pumps, energised by a centrally placed oil-driven power plant.

(*c*) In order to test the feasibility of such irrigation by pumping it has been decided in agreement with Sir William Stampe to carry out exploratory work in three suitably placed plots of land where water will be pumped from adjacent rivers or *bhils* by Diesel oil-driven pumping sets. Search is being made for three suitable sites.

I would, in addition, like to convey the further information that Sir William Stampe paid three visits to Calcutta and discussed with us several irrigation schemes prepared and examined by this Department. Twelve schemes have been approved by him in respect of which the Government of India have sanctioned a 50 per cent. contribution. Five more schemes have been submitted for approval.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when these schemes were recommended?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: About a month and a half ago.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state where are those places where search has already been made?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: Places have not yet been selected and even if they have been I am not prepared to give that information now.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of looking into the case of the district of Bankura where irrigation is very difficult?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: I shall bear that point in mind.

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Members of Bengal Legislature under detention.

36. Babu KHAGENDRANATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the total number of members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and the Bengal Legislative Council—

(*i*) arrested, (*ii*) convicted, or (*iii*) detained under various sections of the Defence of India Act or Rules made thereunder;

(*b*) whether he has personally gone through the cases of those members who have been kept in detention in various jails as security prisoners; and

(*c*) whether he is considering the desirability of releasing them forthwith or giving them facility for attending the meetings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly or Council?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) 20.

(*ii*) 3.

(*iii*) 17.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) I want to refer the honourable member to my statement on the adjournment motion moved by Mr. J. C. Gupta during the current session.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he will consider the desirability of granting allowances to security prisoners who happen to be members of the Legislative Assembly?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government are constantly reviewing cases for granting allowances.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is it the policy of Government that members of the Legislative Assembly should not be granted any allowance?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Some of them are already getting family allowances.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the honourable member be pleased to state who those members are?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice

Realisation of collective fines in Tamluk subdivision of Midnapore district.

37. Khan Bahadur ALFAZUDDIN AHMED: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware—

(*i*) collective fines were imposed on some unions in the Tamluk subdivision of the Midnapore district for lawlessness prevailing in those unions in 1942; and

(*ii*) the said fines have not yet been realised?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the desirability of realising the fines imposed?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) Realisation of the fine has been stayed pending a review of the conditions in Midnapore district.

Damage to certain sluices in Contai.

38. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Panipia and Pichabani sluices in the Contai subdivision, district Midnapore, which served as drainage sluices, have been damaged in the last cyclone?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the steps, if any, taken by the Government to repair them to make them suitable for drainage purposes?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Repairs to the Panipia sluice are almost complete, while repairs to the Pichabani sluice are in good progress.

Ruling on a point of order whether photographs should form part of proceedings.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I should give my decision with regard to the point raised yesterday as to whether or not the photograph should form part of the proceedings. I have considered this matter carefully and I do not think it should form part of the proceedings.

Application for leave of absence.

Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do permit Dr. H. C. Mukherji representing Calcutta *cum* Presidency Division (Indian Christian) Constituency to be absent for the period from the 29th March, 1943, to the end of the present session for which he finds that he is unable to attend meetings of the Assembly.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

Authenticated Schedule of Expenditure for 1943-44.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: In pursuance of sub-section (*2*) of section 80 of the Government of India Act, 1935, I beg to lay before the Assembly the authenticated schedule of expenditure for 1943-44, authenticated by the signature of His Excellency the Governor under sub-section (*1*) thereof.

NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS' BILLS.

The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1940.

Mr. MAQBUL HOSSAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be——.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Maqbul Hossain, I find that the consent of three of the members, namely, those mentioned in Nos. (4), (10) and (14), has not been taken.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, my consent also was not taken.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the rules provide that in any Select Committee the name of the Hon'ble Minister must be included. That is why it is immaterial whether his consent is obtained or not. He must be named a member whether he is pleased to give his consent or not; if the Minister is not willing to serve——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: But you cannot compel a person to serve wthout his consent.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We do not want him to serve, but it is a privilege of the Minister, and the rules have provided that the

Minister's name must be included. Therefore the question of his consent does not arise. The provision for consent has only been made for ordinary members.

Mr. SPEAKER: But I want to know if there is any express provision in the rules which require his consent; and I also want to know if there is anything anywhere in the rules which requires that the Minister must be a member of the Select Committee. I want to be sure on these two points. Mr. Mukerjea, it is a fact that your consent has not been taken, but the question is whether the rules provide that your name must be included.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, rule 54(2) says: Except in a motion that a Bill be referred to a committee of the whole Assembly, the Minister in charge of the department to which a Bill relates, the member who introduced the Bill and other members of the Select Committee shall be named as members in the motion proposing the appointment of a committee. This is the specific rule that so far as the two persons, namely, the member in charge of the Bill and the Minister in charge must be mentioned and that other names must be given.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, the rules provide that the consent of the members must be taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: But where is the consent matter in the rules?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is in the Speaker's rules. As a matter of fact, you will remember, Sir, that consent used to be given on the floor of the House itself. Then the Speaker made it a rule that the consent must reach the hands of the Speaker before the motion is actually taken up. Then at one stage the Speaker ruled that it should reach his office early on the day on which the motion is to be moved.

Mr. SPEAKER: So it is a convention.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It is a convention agreed to by the House at the instance of the Speaker, but consent of the Minister was never taken because the rules definitely provide that he must be there.

Mr. SPEAKER: I may just inform the House that I have been saved the difficulty of giving a ruling because the Hon'ble Minister has just given his consent.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That will not solve the problem; for the time being you are saved. But I submit——

Mr. SPEAKER: But it gives me an opportunity to consider this.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I submit, Sir, that this raises a very important question and it cannot be shelved merely because for the time being the Minister does not press, because we would invite your attention to the fact that non-official members never take consent of the Minister in charge. There has been no occasion when Minister's written consent has been taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: However, as I have said, I am saved from that difficulty for the time being. Mr. Maqbul Hossain, so you omit the three names and move your motion.

Mr. MAQBUL HOSSAIN: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) The Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department,

(2) Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarkar,

(3) Maulvi Asimuddin Ahmed,

(4) Mr. Md. Abul Fazl,

(5) Mr. Dhirendra Nath Dutta,

(6) Khan Bahadur Maulvi Hashem Ali Khan,

(7) Maulvi Idris Ahmed Mia,

(8) Mr. Monmohan Das,

(9) Mr. Jogesh Chandra Gupta,

(10) Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal,

(11) Mr. Charu Chandra Roy,

(12) Maulvi Muhammad Israil,

(13) Maulana Md. Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, and

(14) Mr. Maqbul Hossain (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by 28th February, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

মাননীয় Speaker, Sir, আমার এ সম্বন্ধে কি কি বিষয় আছে তাহা মাননীয় memberদের অবগতির জন্য আমি তার Statement of objects and aims থেকে পড়ে দিচ্ছি।

Preliminary.—The opinion that real benefit can only be bestowed upon the tillers of the soil of Bengal by extending their rights not only in the political field but in the economic sphere as well is gradually gaining ground. There is no denying of it that chronic economic incapacity of the cultivators is responsible for the fact that the lands are rapidly passing away from their hands and that the cultivators are gradually turning into so many landless agricultural labourers. It has become obvious that the last general amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 made in 1937 has failed to solve the major economic problems of the tenants and there has been a persistent demand for further amendment of the Act for the extension of the rights of the cultivators and for the removal of disabilities from which still they have been suffering. It is with these objects in view that amendments to certain sections of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1885, and certain additions of sections to the Act have been proposed in this Bill.

Clauses 2 and 3.—The difference between the amount of revenue paid by the zemindars and the amount of rent paid by the tenants is becoming day by day inequitous and oppressive. The existing rate of rent cannot but be considered excessively disproportionate when compared with the revenue paid by the zemindars. This is one of the causes of the crushing

indebtedness of raiyats. General economic conditions of the country also demand that the enhancement of rent should be stopped and the rent of the tenant should be reduced to the level of their economic capacity. Hence, it has been proposed in the Bill to repeal sections 27 to 37 to stop enhancement of rent of occupancy holding and to insert new section 37A to reduce the rent of occupancy tenants by proposing a more equitous method.

Clause 4.—Section 67 to be amended to reduce the excessive rate of interest.

Clause 5.—Section 68 to be amended to relieve the tenants from further economic pressure of damage as the interest proposed in section 67 is considered sufficient.

Clause 6.—Section 88 to be amended to simplify the present complicated procedure and to make a division of tenure or holding or distribution of rent payable in respect thereof an easy one and to abolish heavy mutation fee.

Clause 7.—New section 88A to be added to make it obligatory upon landlords where their number is ten or exceeds ten to appoint a common agent.

Clause 8.—That tenants are in arrears is solely due to their inability to pay the rent accentuated by heavy fall in the price of agricultural products in recent years. Hence, new section 163A to be inserted after section 163 to extend the benefit of section 37A to the tenants in respect of whose occupancy holding an execution proceeding is pending before a court at the commencement of this Act. This section is of temporary nature.

New section 163B to be inserted after section 163A for sale of a portion or portions of the tenure or holding sufficient to meet the amount under decree and to save the tenants from being deprived of the entire tenure or holding whose market price is always more than the amount decreed together with costs of suit and those of execution proceeding. Besides the tenants should not be deprived of their homestead land: hence provision to this effect has been made in section 163B.

Clause 9.—New sections 173A and 173B to be inserted after section 173 to extend the benefit of sections 174 and 174A to the tenant whose tenure or holding has been sold, confirmed and possession delivered between the first day of January, 1930, and the date of commencement of this Act: These sections are of temporary nature.

Clauses 10 and 11.—Sections 174 and 174A to be amended to give more facilities to judgment-debtor to set aside sale and save his tenancy thereby.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, may I have your permission to move an amendment?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: How can you move an amendment? No notice has been given. There is no amendment on the agenda.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no notice, but he has asked my permission to move an amendment of which notice has just been given.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not fair.

Mr. SPEAKER: I quite see that I may disallow it but the whole point is that if that is done, the result will be that this will go.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The amendment proposed to be made will also mean the same thing. We can anticipate the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: In that case I should rather ask Mr. Maqbul Hossain what he has got to say. It is better for him to accept the amendment—the amendment is for circulation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Let them have the opprobrium of having actually sabotaged a Tenancy Bill. Let them take the responsibility for sidetracking it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Mukerjea, it appears you received this notice on the 15th and you did not care to give any notice of amendment.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That was an omission. You can accept a short-notice amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, I can accept it, I know.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: There is precedent.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is precedent everywhere. In fact, as far as I have been able to see during this session every rule has got to be relaxed on account of the shortness of this session, but in this particular instance, there is no justification whatsoever why at least one or two days before notice was not given, because I ascertained from the records of the Assembly Department that notice of this motion of Mr. Maqbul Hossain was despatched from the Assembly Department to the Revenue Department on the 14th. It must have been received there at the latest on the 15th of September and in the usual course this notice of amendment ought to have been received in the Assembly Department on the 18th, that is, ten days' notice. That has not been done. Practically the notice has been given here on the floor of the House, and it is only under exceptional circumstances that such notices are accepted. Here it appears that the other side opposes and there does not appear to me any sufficient justification why this should be allowed.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, if the mover has no objection, I submit that you will allow the amendment. I would like to make the mover of this motion understand the implication of it. We are going to oppose it and in that case his Bill is going to be killed.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No speech is necessary. The mover is intelligent enough to understand the implication.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, will you permit me to move a short-notice amendment?

Mr. SPEAKER: No. That will be on behalf of Government and will mean the same thing.

Mr. Maqbul Hossain, you are vitally interested in this matter. What appears to me is this; that in case you do not agree to my allowing this amendment here, the result would be that your motion will be defeated and the Bill will be killed. I want to know whether you are going to accept that position.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: If you do not accept the amendment, your Bill will be killed.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In this case also, the Bill is going to be killed.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: No, no. In that case the Bill is not going to be killed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Maqbul Hossain, I want you to say what you intend to do. If you agree I will allow the amendment.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The whole of Bengal will know of your Bill if you accept the amendment.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The whole of Bengal will also know of your conduct.

Mr. MAQBUL HOSSAIN: I do not like to accept the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not in that case give my consent to the moving of this amendment. I disallow it. Yes, Mr. Datta.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I have your indulgence to speak on this subject—a subject on which there should not be any doubt that it is necessary that the rights of raiyats should be extended and, Sir, it is a Bill for the extension of such rights. It is an admitted fact—in fact it is known to all of us—that many cultivators have become landless labourers, and it is absolutely necessary that in the case of tenants whose landlords are more than 10 they should appoint an agent, so that there may not be any difficulty in the matter of payment of rent. In many cases it is an experience common to us all that the number of landlords comes up to 200, 300, 400 and even 500 and there are many co-sharer landlords. So it is difficult to pay rent. In those cases suits are instituted by fractional landlords and when suits are instituted the other landlords are made parties, and the costs of the suits become really prohibitive. If a suit is instituted by a single landlord and 500 persons are made *pro forma* defendants in a case, the cost of making them parties becomes prohibitive and in execution of such decrees holdings are sold. That is our sad experience. So, it is absolutely necessary that in those cases a common agent should be appointed, so that the cost may be lessened. So, Sir, the provisions of this Bill are really for the benefit of the tenants and I hope, Sir, that this Bill will have the support of those persons who really want that occupancy raiyats must have their rights. Through you, Sir, I beg to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department to the importance of this Bill. It has been our sad experience of late that the amendment of section 123 and the consequent amendment of section 115 of the Bengal Tenancy Act have become necessary.

It is necessary, Sir, that occupancy raiyats must have full ownership rights. Rights have been made transferable and it necessarily follows that they have got the full ownership right, but section 123 provides that they will not be allowed to enjoy the land which is rendered unfit for the purposes of tenancy. Even if improvements are effected by the tenants, suits have cropped up at least in my district for ejectment under section 158A of the Bengal Tenancy Act of the tenants on the ground that the land has been rendered unfit for the purposes of tenancy; such suits have cropped up lately in a large number. It is inconsistent with the right of full ownership of raiyats and it is absolutely necessary, Sir, that the rights of raiyats should be extended, so that occupancy raiyats may have full ownership right, and so this Bill should be passed by the House. I know, Sir, that Government will sabotage this Bill. I think, Sir, that the amendment that was sought to be moved for circulation for a certain period is only an attempt to sabotage this Bill. Fortunately, this amendment has been disallowed by the Hon'ble Speaker, but I know that this motion for reference to a Select Committee will be opposed by the members of the Government party. These members profess to be the real friends of the cultivators, but I am quite sure that they will not hesitate to support the Government in this matter. I know, Sir, that Government is not the real friend of the tenants. Government made some amendments of the Bengal Tenancy Act in the year 1937 and at that it was declared that these amendments were not final and that there would be some other amendments later on to give more aid to the tenants, cultivators and tillers of the soil who are the real producers of wealth. But, Sir, these promises have not been fulfilled up to this time and they do not like to fulfill the promise. It may be contended by the other side at this time, that is during the war time any controversial Bill should not be introduced in the Bengal Legislative Assembly, but a Bill of a very controversial nature has been introduced in the shape of the Agricultural Income Tax Bill. This Bill has been introduced at the instance of the Government of India. If a controversial Bill can be introduced at the instance of the Government of India why should this Bill which will be of some benefit to the tillers of the soil and producers of wealth be opposed by Government it is really difficult to understand. But, Sir, they pretend to be the friends of the tillers of the soil. If they are then they will not oppose the motion. The Government have got the backing of persons who claim to be friends of the tillers of the soil and yet this motion would be opposed. I draw the attention of the supporters of Government to the salutary nature of the provisions of the Bill. This is a Bill which will give right to the tenants and tillers of the soil. I do hope if they are really sincere they will not support the Government in opposing the Bill. I commend the motion of my friend, Mr. Maqbul Hossain, to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, for the information of the House I may say that a Bill of a similar nature has been introduced in this House by Mr. Abdul Hakim of Mymensingh, and that has already been referred to a Select Committee. I feel that a Bill of a similar nature can hardly serve any useful purpose.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: This is not a Bill of a similar nature.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Government have to oppose all piecemeal legislation. I assure the House that all these matters are receiving the serious consideration of Government and it is the intention of Government to introduce a comprehensive Bill at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: When?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: During the next session.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: All untrue.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I oppose the motion.

The motion of Mr. Maqbul Hossain that the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be referred to a Select Committee was then put and a division taken with the following result:

AYES—21.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Manuruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Shahedali, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.

NOES—73.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Mr.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Aminullah, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Aulad Hossain Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Barma, The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Mr. Jatindra Nath.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Faziul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, The Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hasanuzzaman, Maulvi Md.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.

Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Dr. (Bogra).
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, The Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, The Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, The Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Mustagawsal Haque, Mr. Syed.
Nandy, Maharaja Srischandra, of Cossimbazar.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Shahabuddin, The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Tamizuddin Khan, The Hon'ble Mr.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Zahur Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi.
Zillur Rahman Shah Chowdhury.

The Ayes being 31 and the Noes 73 the motion was lost.

The Bengal Rent Reduction Bill, 1941.

Mr. AMRITA LAL MANDAL: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Rent Reduction Bill, 1941, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(*2*) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

Mr. A. F. STARK: On a point of order, Sir. The Select Committee on this Bill has no representative from our group.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

Mr. AMRITA LAL MANDAL: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Rent Reduction Bill, 1941, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) The Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department,
(2) Mr. Upendra Nath Edbar,
(3) Mr. Monomohan Das,
(4) Mr. Mirza Abdul Hafiz,
(5) Mr. Charu Chandra Roy,
(6) Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas,
(7) Maulvi Muhammad Israil,
(8) Mrs. Hemaprova Majumdar, and
(9) Mr. Amrita Lal Mandal (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by 28th February, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I beg to move by way of amendment that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1944.

Mr. AMRITA LAL MANDAL: Sir, I accept the amendment.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I have got to make some observation in this connection. I oppose the motion moved by the Hon'ble Minister in charge and my grounds are very simple.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, I think when the motion of the Hon'ble Minister has been accepted by the mover of the Bill no further debate can arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Acceptance by the member concerned or otherwise makes no difference at all. Now, it is the property of the House and you should realise that position.

Now, Sir, I am glad that the Chief Minister and Home Minister is just inside the House, because I would like to refer some matters to him, —the Hon'ble Chief Minister and Home Minister of the Government of Bengal whom we thought some amount of respect could be reposed in, because he never gives false promises (Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Coalition Benches) so far as the question of handling of non-official Bills is concerned and of other matters are concerned. But it has been our unfortunate experience that promises are held out never to be fulfilled, and I would like the Chief Minister to make his colleagues sufficiently alive to the situation to see that the code of parliamentary moral that he wants to retain may be followed also by his colleagues. We have got before us a long list of pending legislations and in that list you will find that there are many Bills which have had no opportunity of introduction even and there has been a terrible massacre of innocents. Sir, today in the Order paper we have got about half a dozen Bills and in most of the cases Government's attempt has been to have the Bills referred to the public for eliciting opinion thereon. It has been our experience that this is the trick that is played by Government to shelve a question. I realise that law-making may not be the proper function of individual non-official members. The position is this: when a non-official member proposes any Bill the main purpose of so doing is to invite the attention of the Government to certain serious problems and if Government is sufficiently alive and alert, it should be their business to bring forward suitable legislations covering those grievances, and if Government feel that those grievances are not genuine the only honest course for the Government would be to oppose the Bill stating their grounds for opposing and prevent the wastage of paper through circulation, printing and all that. This process of last minute motions being put in for eliciting public opinion costs a good deal of money which must be avoided.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Hear, hear!

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am glad that Mr. Stark agrees with me. But I am afraid that instead of Sir Nazimuddin giving his healthy influence on the other members of the Cabinet he is imbibing the same habit himself. A few days ago he was good enough to throw a challenge to me regarding the Ispahanis and I took up that challenge. Today is the

fifth day of that challenge but he has not been pleased to call for me or ask me as to when he will make this enquiry and how this matter can be gone into.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Which matter?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have just said that Sir Nazimuddin has been known always to be a man of straight talks and to be maintaining parliamentary manners so far as truth, fairness and honesty go, and I wanted him to influence his colleagues to see that so far as this Bill was concerned it was not opposed. But instead of exercising that influence on them he is himself being influenced by them. I submit, let him not be infected by his colleagues which, I am afraid, he is getting into, and as an instance thereof I have quoted that only five days ago he had held out a challenge to me in connection with certain enquiries we demanded and he asked me to help him in making those enquiries.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: How is that relevant?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, that is an instance I am quoting (Cries of "Ha, ha" from the Coalition Benches) and I can assure the House that I am prepared to stand on every statement I have made and I am prepared to prove to the hilt that every one of my statements is correct. If there is any honest difference of opinion between Sir Nazimuddin and myself I am prepared to correct myself. And if the contrary is proved I shall be the first person to make a statement publicly about it.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: On a point of order, Sir. I think he is going too far. What he is stating now, I submit, has got no connection with the subject.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have stopped him and he will go no further.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have already assured you and I can assure the House through you if Sir Nazimuddin has no time himself, let him ask Mr. Fazlur Rahman who is the Chief Whip of Government, or Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali to come with me and make an enquiry and I am prepared to give my services.

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: Every time he rises in this way and if you cannot make him sit down——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What was your observation?

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: If you cannot make him sit down try to make him sit down.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is my business.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: On a point of privilege arising from the remarks of Mr. Narendra Narayan Chakrabarty——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the House is replying. I do not understand why is this disturbance for.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: I have risen on a point of privilege.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already allowed Sir Nazimuddin to say on that point.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I consider this a very reprehensible practice which Dr. Sanyal has indulged in. He has on a matter which has got nothing to do with it made a statement which is not correct and which may be proved from the record of the Assembly Proceedings I am certain; I challenged him to submit his figures (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Figures are Ispahanis! I have no figures) and he accepted my challenge and asked me where he could come and give me figures—I think that will be in the Assembly Proceedings—and I replied that it should be in my room in the Assembly building. These are matters which can be proved from the Assembly Proceedings—I am sure those have been recorded there—and now deliberately and knowing that he has not been able to submit those figures for four days that we have been waiting he has now come out and turned the table on us and asked for figures. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Figures are Ispahanis' figures. How can I give them?) He knew that he was absolutely in the wrong and that he would be taken to task. So he has now come forward to make this statement which is absolutely incorrect and irrelevant to the issue.

Dr. Sanyal has started with a lecture on the propriety of maintaining Parliamentary practice and I am afraid he indulged deliberately knowingly in these things. I know that because he discussed this with me yesterday. He asked me and I told him what he was expected to do and he said he would not give it in my room but would announce it in the House. I said that would be propaganda and would be *goondami* and today he has done just the reverse of it. It shows that the whole allegation against Ispahani is a deliberate propaganda, baseless and absolutely false.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The matter is closed.

With regard to Mr. Stark's observation or point of order I may point out that there is possibly no such ruling given by Sir Azizul Haque. The only thing is that there is a convention that all groups should be represented in the Select Committee. It is not for me to explain why Mr. Mandal excluded the members of the European group from his motion.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that the Bengal Rent Reduction Bill, 1941, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1944, was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1941.

Maulvi MD. ABDUL HAKIM VIKRAMPURI: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1941.

(The Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Close Season for Fishes Bill, 1941.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Not moved.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, there is one thing I want to draw your attention to. I had a Bill; it was on the agenda paper; I know I cannot move it. But I want to state that I wrote to the Secretary asking for permission for this Bill to be transferred to another member who could move it. I have not received any reply and I do not know what is your decision.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot give any decision on this point. For your information I can say that the Hon'ble Speaker has refused permission to transfer.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I can explain the position. It was in effect a Bill of Sir Nazimuddin and it was in accordance with the promise which the Chief Minister had made and therefore it was a Bill tabled on behalf of the party.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may refer this matter when Mr. Speaker is in the Chair.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am losing the chance.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot give any decision. I have already said that this has been disallowed by Mr. Speaker and it is not for me to reopen it. I cannot do it.

The Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1941.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1941.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1943.

Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Cossimbazar: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1943.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Advocates' Robes Bill, 1941.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Advocates' Robes Bill, 1941.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

Mr. DEBENDRA NATH DAS: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1942.

Mr. ABDUL KARIM: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1942.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Housing Bill, 1942.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Housing Bill, 1942.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

I beg also to move that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1942, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st December, 1943.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. The rule provides that any motion after the introduction stage can be taken up only when copies of the Bill have been made available to the members for at least 7 days. I do not remember having received a copy of this Bill so far. Will your office kindly enlighten us if the copies of the Bill have been sent.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the rule, Dr. Sanyal?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Rule 51—Motions after introduction —runs thus: "When a Bill is introduced, or on some subsequent occasion, the member in charge of the Bill having given the notice prescribed may make one of the following motions——(*a*), (*b*) and (*c*)"——and then you see at the bottom "available for fifteen days" if a motion under clause (*a*) has to be moved, or "for seven days" if motions under clauses (*b*) and (*c*) are to be moved.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Gupta, the rules require that before you are permitted to move the motion for circulation you ought to have circulated your Bill to the members. Now, did you do that?

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: I have circulated the Bill through post office and I do not know whether it has reached or not.

Mr. SPEAKER: You say that you circulated the Bill to all the members through post office?

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: Yes, Sir, last year and not this year.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think Dr. Sanyal, perhaps you got it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir. I have also enquired of all other friends round here and none of them has got it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. When the member in charge of the Bill makes a statement to the effect that he circulated the Bill about a year ago through post office, I think——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the rules are specific. The rule says if any member wants to move——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, it is the privilege of an individual member——

Mr. SPEAKER: Will you please sit down?

I think I have got to accept that statement. Now, if there are any other objections arising out of the rule——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir, I have said that the rules are specific, that any member may object to any such motion being moved unless copies of the Bill have been made available 15 days before or 7 days before in the case of (*b*) and (*c*). The honourable members say that they have not received it.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is not the interpretation, Sir. In that case any member at any time can sabotage a Bill. Any member can get up and say that he has not received the Bill, and in that case there cannot be any consideration of any Bill, and especially when Dr. Sanyal is present in this House.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What actually happens is this. The Bill is first introduced. Then the office takes cognisance of it and after introduction the Bill is published in the *Official Gazette* or the office takes the responsibility for circulating the Bill to the members and it is only then that no member can get up and say "I have not received it", because either it will be in the gazette or it must have been circulated by the office.

Mr. SPEAKER: Whether it is circulated by office or by the post office it comes to the same thing. Dr. Sanyal, have you got anything more to say?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Nothing more.

Mr. SPEAKER: It appears clear from rule 51 that it is open to a member to introduce a Bill and to move it for circulation on the same day. That clearly indicates that there is no bar to his moving the second motion, provided he has fulfilled the proviso to rule 51. Now rule 51 lays down that no such motion should ordinarily be allowed unless copy of the Bill has been made available to members of the House before a certain number of days. The expression is "made available". Now, when an honourable member of this House makes a statement to the effect that he sent through post copies of the Bill about a year ago, I think he has fulfilled the condition of the proviso. It may be that by accident a copy meant for a particular member has been missed or has been lost. It may be that by accident many copies have been lost. Even incidental non-receipt of a copy by a member will not be any valid ground for not allowing the member to move the second motion standing in his name.

Yes, Mr. Gupta. I think you have moved it.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: I have moved my motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen.

Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1942, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1945.

My idea is that we are passing through crisis after crisis. It is not the time to speak on a Bill like this. Those who are concerned specially with industrial houses—they must get time to give their opinions on the Bill in their leisure moments. So, I move this amendment for circulation of the Bill by the 31st March, 1945.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I want to make a few observations on the motion moved by the member and also on the amendment. I must make it clear at this stage that I have just had occasion to have a cursory glance through the Bill from a copy obtained from Mr. Gupta by my friend Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen. I find, Sir, from that copy that the object that Mr. Gupta has in view is laudable. Mr. Gupta wants certain minimum conditions of healthy living to be ensured for working class people who generally occupy rented houses paying rents of Rs. 10 or Rs. 20 and I am entirely at one with Mr. J. N. Gupta when he thinks that some legislative control is necessary to make it obligatory on the owners of houses to provide sanitary conditions and healthy living conditions for such working class habitations. Sir, the draft of the Bill as I have seen it, however, leaves very much room for revision.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir. Dr. Sanyal said that he did not receive a copy of this Bill. In that case I do not know how he can speak on this Bill.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Were you sleeping? I said that I had just seen it from Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: In one minute?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, probably some people can see things much quicker than you can do.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: You see things in imagination.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The whole object of the Bill is such that it may be covered by some of the existing legislation which applies to municipalities. If the local authorities are sufficiently alert the conditions required by Mr. Gupta in his proposed Bill can be enforced largely by executive action. In that sense some of the provisions that he seeks to embody in the form of a Bill may not be necessary. There are also other provisions which are absurd. One such is that Mr. Gupta wants the Minister in charge to issue orders. I never know of any provision in any enactment in which the Minister is given power to issue orders. Either the Government will issue orders or the Secretary of the Department whoever he may be. Mr. Gupta in his Bill wants to give power to the Minister which he has not under the Government of India Act. That may be just a mistake on his part as to the proper function of Ministers in the present Constitution, and I am sure that if some time was given to him he

would in consultation with persons who could assist him in drafting present something more acceptable. My whole objection to the Bill as it is drafted being sent round is in Mr. Gupta's own interest. Let not the country outside think that we, legislators, here send round drafts for eliciting public opinion which on the face of them appear to be unacceptable. I would therefore respectfully request Mr. Gupta himself to withdraw the Bill in its present form and have it redrafted more suitably in consultation with Government and find out if some of the objects he has in view could not be attained by mere executive action within the framework of present legislation.

With these few words, Sir, I respectfully submit that it would not be very laudable, very creditable for this House to spend public money on printing and on postage for circulation of Bills which might require considerable amount of revision and redrafting.

The motion of Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1942, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st March, 1945, was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. J. N. Gupta that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1942, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st December, 1943, was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Hindu Women's Rights to Agricultural Land Bill, 1941.

Miss MIRA DUTTA GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introdudce the Bengal Hindu Women's Rights to Agricultural Land Bill, 1941.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Money-Lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

Maulvi ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Money-Lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

(Secretary then read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Close Season for Fishes Bill, 1941.

Mr. AHMED HOSSAIN: Sir I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Close Season for Fishes Bill, 1941.

Mr. P. BANERJI: On a point of order, Sir. When this motion was called by Mr. Deputy Speaker who was then in the Chair the honourable member was present but he did not move and it was passed over.

Mr. AHMED HOSSAIN: I entered the House just at the time when it was being passed over.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Ahmed Hossain; do you mean to say that you were not in the House then?

Mr. AHMED HOSSAIN: I entered the House when it was being just passed over.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is a question of statement *versus* statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir, it is a question of the decision of the Deputy Speaker *versus* statement. We saw the member sitting with all his paraphernalia and if necessary the proceedings may be consulted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Suppose, when this Bill was called, he was in; suppose, he could not hear; whatever it might have been, it is a fact that he could not move But, is it, for that reason, barred by limitation or by any rule? Am I bound to refuse him leave to move it at a later stage? He has only asked for the permission of the Speaker, who, I think, is the deciding authority, to allow him to move.

Mr. P. BANERJI: May I remind you that when a decision has been taken by the Deputy Speaker in the absence of the Speaker, whether you can revise that decision?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a question of revising a ruling given by the Deputy Speaker who was in the Chair: If it had been a question of ruling I think it would have been extremely difficult for me even if I held a different opinion to say that he was wrong and to revise. But here we are not concerned with any ruling. What happened is that this particular motion was called and it was not moved and the Deputy Speaker said that it was not moved. That was all. Now the member in charge of the Bill comes forward and says that he wants to move the motion and he wants my permission to be allowed to move his motion. Is there anything in the rules or is there any convention of the House that such a request cannot be complied with?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: But the facts of the case are a little otherwise. This honourable member was sitting on the fourth bench to the right of where he is sitting now and when the Deputy Speaker called his name and asked him to move, he looked at him and this gentleman looked back to the Deputy Speaker and then he looked to the whip of his party who did not allow him to move and he did not move (cries of "These are all lies" from the Government party benches)——

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: On a point of order, Sir. (When Mr. Chakrabarty rose on a point of order, Dr. Sanyal went on speaking.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order; Dr. Sanyal, Mr. Chakrabarty has risen on a point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am already speaking on a point of order, Sir, and I am not going to yield. I find that Mr. Chakrabarty has

suddenly become very eloquent in the House but where was he only the other day? (At this stage there were noisy demonstrations from both sides of the House.)

Mr. SPEAKER: This is the last day of the session and this is a day of non-official business. I would appeal to you all to finish the day's business in a calm atmosphere.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In any case Mr. Chakrabarty seems to have become a constitutional *pundit* of late, raising points of order!

Mr. AHMED HOSSAIN: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Close Season for Fishes Bill, 1941.

(Secretary read the short title of the Bill.)

The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

Mr. MD. ABUL FAZL: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

(Secretary read the short title of the Bill.)

Prorogation.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor that the Bengal Legislative Assembly do stand prorogued.

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